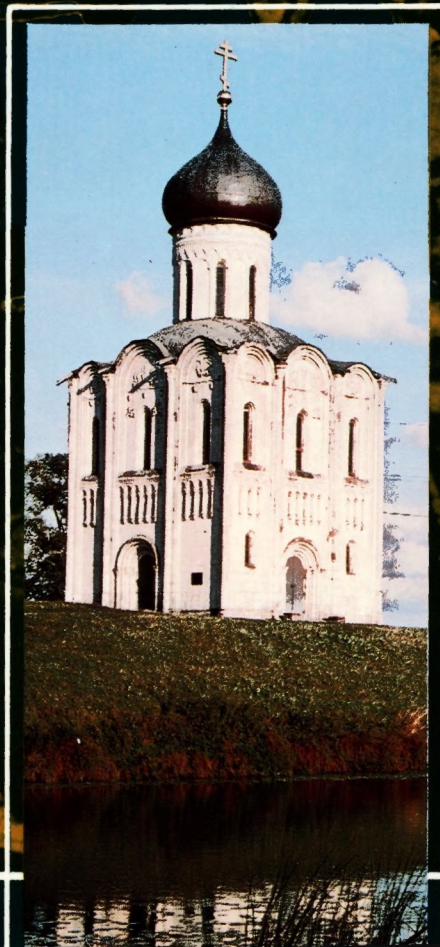


Feudal Society and Its Culture



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Feudal Society and Its Culture



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ФЕОДАЛЬНОЕ ОБЩЕСТВО И ЕГО КУЛЬТУРА

Под редакцией член-корр. АН СССР
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During the Age of Enlightenment it was considered bad taste to make positive judgements on the Middle Ages. The gargoyles of the Cathedral of Notre Dame de Paris were considered monuments to a time as ugly and barbarous as they themselves, while the portals of the gothic churches "stigmatized" their creators. On the other hand, the Romantics of the 18th and early 19th centuries looked upon that same period as a unique and picturesque era with no less an important part to play in the history of mankind than classical Greece. These two ages—the one of rejection, the other of idealization—were followed by a time in which both scientific and artistic methodology were employed to reach a better understanding of the medieval period. Stendhal wrote that the culture and spirit of the Middle Ages were still incomprehensible to his contemporaries, while his fellow-countryman, Victor Hugo, saw the gothic cathedral as a statement in stone of a single, purposeful spiritual passion, an expression of the power and integrity of a social structure.

The serious study of the Middle Ages began in the latter part of the 19th century and with it came acute ideological debates over the nature of the historical process in that period, for it became a kind of "historical quarry" from which not only historians, but literary critics, philosophers and sociologists took the materials for constructing their theoretical postulates. The medieval period not only in Western Europe, but in Byzantium, Russia and the East began increasingly to attract the attention of special-

ists and scholars. Even today in the bustling 20th century, a period which has been so eventful and which is seemingly so absorbed in its own problems, interest in the Middle Ages though having its ups and downs has never waned. Our age has taken the medieval period and, as it were, melted it in its own crucible to make it not only the subject of scientific research and museum displays, but through the mass media to bring certain elements of this period to the general knowledge of the population at large. Primarily, of course, this has been in relation to medieval culture, religion and religious artifacts.

This book, *Feudal Society and Its Culture* is about the Middle Ages, for this was the period which saw the rise and decline of feudalism. The term "feudalism" appeared about two hundred years ago, before the French Revolution, being coined by French writers to describe the structure of a society that had existed for more than ten centuries and which was then on the point of disappearance. It referred to the division of society into social estates, privileges for the nobility, closed corporations, various forms of serfdom, the inability of state government to meet the demands of the time, the dominant position of the church and all that hampered the movement of society forward and restricted the development of industry, trade, politics and culture. The word "feudalism" like the old word "feod" or fief, from which it was derived and which meant land granted by the lord to his vassal in perpetuity on condition of the latter's service, belonged to the past. And this past the French writers like the Italian humanists before

them called the "Middle Ages", by which they meant the intervening period between the "golden age" of Antiquity (as they understood it) and their own times which they called the "Modern Age", the age of progress. But although this disparaging evaluation of an enormous period of history when whole nations were passing through the social formation of feudalism has long been repudiated and feudalism has been recognized as a natural stage in historical development, the terminology the "Ancient World", the "Middle Ages" and the "Modern Age" has been firmly established in historical science. But at the same time the concept "Middle Ages" has long overstepped the bounds of European history and is now used on a world-wide scale.

The theory of social formations on which Soviet historical science is based is used as the foundation for the scientific periodization of history. The generally accepted division of history into "ancient", "medieval" and "modern" was seen by the founding fathers of Marxism to be based not on political criteria which are superficial and frequently accidental and not on the character and development level of a society's religious life, but rather on the economic and social structures that characterize the slave-holding, feudal and capitalist modes of production. They sought the specifics of feudalism primarily in the sphere of material production and property relations. From these they deduced the remaining characteristics of social, political and legal relations as well as the ideology and culture of the period. Thus what was primarily understood by the term "medieval" was the formation, development and dissolution of the feudal mode of production.

The Middle Ages, like any other historical epoch, neither began nor reached its culmination everywhere simultaneously and the feudal system, as the main typological characteristic of that period, developed earlier in some parts of the world than in others. The generally accepted boundary between antiquity and the Middle Ages in Western Europe is the year 476 A. D., which is the date of the fall of the Western Roman Empire, although embryonic feudal relations had begun to appear earlier, in the 3rd and 4th centuries. It was approximately at this time, too, that China, India, Iran and a number of other Eastern and Central Asian countries also began the feudal path of development. The boundary between feudalism and the newly developing capi-

talism is generally accepted to lie in the 16th and 17th centuries, when the first bourgeois revolutions took place in the West. The establishment of this boundary for the countries of Asia, Africa and America, however, is far more complex, and a discussion of the problem is included later in the book. Thus the material contained here covers a period of some fifteen hundred years during the course of which the various countries and peoples discussed went through the sequence of an early, developed and late medieval period.

The question naturally arises why should modern man today want to know about the Middle Ages, separated as he is by hundreds of years, numerous revolutions and wars and other epoch-making events. Surely it is enough for the Middle Ages to remain the province of scholars and specialists. And yet the fact remains that modern man's interest in the Middle Ages is something far from academic. Millions of people all over the world read books and watch films on the medieval period. The youth of many countries know and love the epic tales of their national heroes. And recent years have been marked by a rapid growth of interest in medieval culture and art. As twentieth century man looks back on that period his interest is not only aroused by the question: what was it like then? He also tries to see and understand the causes of contemporary developments, whose roots stretch into the distant past, when the majority of the world's nations were formed and the bases for many of the world's states were laid. It was in that period that certain political, ideological and cultural traditions were formed that have still remained to the present day. The mass rural and urban movements of the Middle Ages were the cradle of the revolutionary traditions of a subsequent period and were the source of the struggle against national oppression, the spiritual dictatorship of religion and the church. The Middle Ages knew not only obscurantism and ignorance, religious fanaticism and feudal violence, they were also a time of great cultural achievement with the creation of great literary, artistic and architectural monuments, of beautiful examples of national art and remarkable pieces of folk handicraft. It was in the Middle Ages that the first tender shoots of scientific knowledge began to break through and gather strength so that by the end of the period the foundations for modern science had been laid.

But today feudalism is not just a thing of the past. In many parts of the world certain elements of that social structure still exist. In Asia, Africa, South America—particularly in the countries recently liberated from colonial oppression—and even in certain regions of Western and Southern Europe very tangible vestiges of feudal relations still remain. Without knowledge of their nature and origins it is difficult to struggle against them and reveal the trends for the future development of such countries. Thus, to know and understand the Middle Ages means in a certain sense to understand better the modern world.

Such a vast historical period as that covered by the Middle Ages could naturally be neither uniform nor undiversified in countries as different as France or China, Russia or India. So what is it then that makes it possible to speak of the Middle Ages as a separate historical period, despite all the variety of its specific historical manifestations at different times in different countries? The history of the peoples of both East and West during the medieval period is linked by the fact that their civilizations both rested on a common social and economic base—the feudal mode of production, which in some places was more developed and stable than in others, but whose basis was always the same—landed property in the hands of the feudal nobility. From the social point of view the feudal lords stood opposed to the peasants, the direct producing class, who had no property of their own, but worked on the land and were exploited by the feudal nobility through various non-economic forms of coercion which varied from outright serfdom to inequality of rights. The feudal system of the Middle Ages gave the history of the various countries and peoples of the time a kind of historical integrity, not in the sense that it was everywhere dominant, but because it was the leading force that determined the direction of economic, social, political and cultural development. Feudal society was not stagnant and immobile. During the almost fifteen hundred years of its existence in the Middle Ages different peoples, countries and regions at different times would move ahead. It was a society in a perpetual motion that had no regularity in either its speed or direction. But feudalism as a stage in the historical development of mankind differed radically from the slave-owning world of antiquity which was replaced by it or the

capitalist world that followed next. It was a necessary historical stage through which most peoples of the world have had to pass and it is in this sense that we talk about the historical importance of feudalism to the world.

But having the same dominant mode of production was not the only common factor in the life of the various medieval societies. There were many similarities in social life and historical events that make it possible to establish that feudalism was a universal historical system in its own right. The original concept of feudalism was, of course, developed on the basis of European history. But the history of the East, North Africa and Latin America shows that these areas have also known feudalism and that many of the peoples there have passed through their own more or less developed medieval period, though the latter has not always coincided with the better known Middle Ages in Europe. The legal, political and juridical aspects of the life of society which determine certain trends in the cultural development of various peoples at the feudal stage show a great similarity in essence for all their apparently outward divergence. Thus the feudal hierarchy with its dependence on landed property, the connection between political power and landownership, the political fragmentation of society and the many other characteristic features of feudalism have all been found present in many different regions of the world.

The history of the Middle Ages is the history of acute class conflict between the peasants and the feudal lords. Peasant uprisings took place on a scale unknown before or after in both the West and the East. Towards the end of the medieval period they began to amalgamate with the early bourgeois revolutions and thus helped to bring about the collapse of feudalism.

The feudal state, whatever the form it took in the Middle Ages, was always an instrument of power in the hands of the feudal lords and hostile to the masses of the peasants. Feudal law, which was endorsed by practice and legislation, only served to strengthen feudal relations and the specific forms of property ownership.

The Middle Ages were an era of complex international relations which ended in the formation of many of modern nations and states. The political face of the period was formed by the unceasing inte-

raction between peoples, and frequently this interaction welled over regional and even continental boundaries to exist on a truly world-historical scale (take, for example, the great migration of peoples at the dawn of the Middle Ages, the headlong movement of the Arab peoples and the fruitful contacts between Russia and the countries of both West and East).

The Middle Ages saw the expansion and firm establishment of three of the world's great religions—Christianity, Islam and Buddhism. Buddhism and Christianity, both of which began in the ancient world, and Islam, which arose in the early part of the medieval period, acquired under feudal society a genuinely universal character, taking upon themselves many of the elements of a superstructure such as law, political theory, a system of ethics, philosophy and of course religion itself. They became the synthesis of and sanction for the feudal system, bestowing upon it the aura of divine authority. Religion and its organizational form, the Church, played an important role in the life of society both in the East and in the West. And it was not only Christianity which set up the Church, but Buddhism and Islam too. But for all the differences between them, which were far from being just superficial, the forms of ecclesiastical organization of the three great religions had a number of definite features in common. There was the division into the clergy and the laity, the church hierarchy and the principle of authority. They all claimed a special place not only in the spiritual, but also in the political life of society. Their history is not only the history of religion, but the history of continuous political struggle. But at the same time, for all the similarity in fundamentals, the specific historical existence of different religions and churches in various parts of the world and at various times in the Middle Ages had clearly expressed specific features and these made their individual histories quite unique.

But the deep-seated similarity in the lives of the peoples who lived in the Middle Ages is not even limited to the above characteristics. Detailed research makes it possible to show that other common trends existed in many aspects of the functioning of feudal society. The destiny of peoples, as was mentioned above, was closely interwoven through the medieval period, for no single people could move successfully for long on the path of historical devel-

opment in isolation from the others. The links between countries and peoples during the Middle Ages could be either very close or hardly distinguishable, but they invariably existed and thereby formed the kind of historical community that makes it possible not only to assert that the specifics of development were regional and time-governed, but to state that medieval civilization was of world-historical importance. It was, of course, during that period that the European community arose and developed through the interaction and similarity of historical development between the various peoples inhabiting the European continent. Similar processes took place throughout Asia. During the Middle Ages a complex system of international relations was formed through which East and West, and towards the end of the period, the Old World and the New World interacted. The history of many peoples during the Middle Ages can only be explained within the framework of world history. One could hardly, for example, write the history of Russia in the Middle Ages out of touch with the history of Byzantium, Western Europe, Central Asia and the Mongols.

This book, *Feudal Society and Its Culture*, does not claim to present a general history of the world during the Middle Ages in the traditional manner. There are no detailed analyses of facts and events from the history of all peoples at that time. Nevertheless, it is a world history, for it reflects not only the specific characteristics of the history of Western Europe, Byzantium, Russia, the Middle East, North Africa, America, India, China and Japan, but also attempts to show feudalism as a single social, economic, political and cultural system, which was both regional and world-wide. In accordance with this aim, history in this book is presented primarily not as the sum total of the histories of individual countries, but as an explanation of the historical destinies of whole regions—Western Europe, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, the Far East, South-East Asia, Central and South America—and of their content and importance within the framework of world history at large. This approach does not erode the distinctions between the histories of individual countries and peoples. On the contrary, an understanding of their overall similarity makes it possible to show the role of each people and country in the general historical process of

the Middle Ages more fully. And this role is seen not as something self-sufficient, but as an element of universal historical interconnection. It becomes clearly apparent, for example, in analysing the history of Russia from ancient times to the late 17th century. The formation of the ancient Russian State appears as a process of drawing together and uniting the Slavic tribes to form a country which later became the meeting point between East and West and thus a powerful factor in world history.

The interesting historical material presented in the chapters on feudalism in North Africa, Ethiopia and America has been interpreted in a new light as a result of which the peoples of these areas have become equal participants in the single world-historical process in the age of feudalism.

The classic forms of feudalism have been treated on the basis of the history of Western Europe. The complexity and variety of life in feudal society has been shown, fundamental concepts offered and the basic patterns of the development of the socio-economic formation of feudalism explained.

The history and culture of Byzantium in all its richness and variety has been treated and an evaluation given of its place in the historical development of mankind.

The distinctive and the common characteristics of feudalism in the East (Hither Asia, India, China and Japan) present a problem which is still widely discussed among historians. And the authors of this book have not intended to gloss over it. On the contrary, they retain a variety of approaches and opinions, which make it possible to see clearly and extensively the character of the historical processes in these countries.

The book, *Feudal Society and Its Culture* is written by a group of scholars from Moscow and Leningrad. To a certain extent it sums up and makes readily available the extensive research on the history of the Middle Ages which has gone on for many years in the Soviet Union. Each writer is a leading specialist in his own sphere with his own evaluations of specific historical problems, though as a team they preserve a unity of methodological analysis. The collection is unified by a common idea, but varies in approach, in subject and in the criteria used for the selection of material. Thus general historical theses lie side by side with analyses of original "images" of feudal society with its unique features and

characteristics in various regions and countries, which in the aggregate reveal the wealth and colour of historical reality in the feudal period.

The distinctive characteristic of this book lies in the fact that it presents a synthesis of social and cultural history. The Middle Ages created a rich and varied culture. It was during this period that many of the world's literary languages were formed and the foundations of national literatures laid. It was a time when major literary, and more particularly cultural similarities began to unite peoples of different languages, as can be seen in the oral traditions and in the art and cultural life of the people living then. A special chapter is devoted to medieval culture in Western Europe. As to that culture, the logical rigour of its philosophical constructs, the intricate designs of the soaring Gothic cathedrals, the elegance of the miniature paintings, the dramatic and heroic world of the knights in armour, the sophistication of the theology, the vast imagination of the folk bards, the skill of the handicraftsmen and the simple everyday features of medieval life reveal the various facets of a world that has been preserved in the works of both great masters and unknown artists alike.

The Renaissance has been treated separately as ushering in a new era in the history of world culture.

The whole magnificence of Byzantine culture with its erudition, its sophisticated religion, its ceremonial splendour, the artistic perfection of its palatial and ecclesiastical architecture, the golden gleam of its mosaics and the elegance of its applied art are described in this work. As are the wonderful world of Slavic folklore and Russian heroic tales, annalistic tradition, the uniqueness of the Russian architectural ensembles, the poetry of Russian frescoes and icon-painting and the distinctive features of medieval life in ancient Rus.

The book also contains much of interest on medieval Chinese and Japanese poetry, on Indian philosophy, on the subtleties of Eastern, religious doctrines, on the amazing Japanese art of flower arrangement—the *ikebana*, on the discoveries of the Arab scientists, on the medieval theatre in Ethiopia, on the art of medieval Persia and on the art and painting of the peoples of Central and South America.

But it is not only the individuality and achieve-

ments of the various cultures that attract the attention of the authors of this book. What they have set out to do is always to see the common features in apparently different phenomena, to see what it is that unites different works and phenomena into the culture of a single historical epoch and to show not only the heights, but also the contradictions in its

development. The book is illustrated by a large number of coloured and black-and-white photographs to help make medieval culture come more alive to the reader.

We hope this book will help to reveal something of the complex, mysterious, but always interesting world of the Middle Ages.

Feudalism was one of the most important stages of historical development for the countries of Europe and Asia, and for some of the peoples of Africa and America. The period during which it began, flourished and declined is commonly known as the Middle Ages. The chronological framework for the Middle Ages is not the same for all continents, countries and peoples. In Europe it is customary to consider the Middle Ages as beginning from the late 5th century A. D., while in Asia this period is generally thought to have started a little earlier, in the 3rd-5th centuries. The 17th century is generally reckoned to be the boundary dividing the Middle Ages from the modern times, when capitalist relations began to develop within feudal society.

In various parts of the world feudalism adopted various forms, and different countries and different peoples entered the different phases of the feudal formation at different times. Medieval culture was multifaceted and magnificent, forming and flourishing in various corners of the feudal world.

But for all its variety the medieval period was a single world-historical epoch in which history moved and economic, social, political and cultural forces developed on one foundation—the feudal mode of production.

The economic basis of feudalism was the land which belonged to the feudal nobility. The peasants depended on the latter to work the land, which they paid for in either work, produce or money. The degree of dependence of the peasantry on their feudal lords varied according to the area and the period from such extreme forms as total serfdom to merely an agreed relationship of dependence. As

distinct from the slaves of the ancient world the peasants had their own implements and had their own private small holdings. Thus they had a certain material incentive.

Feudalism grew up as the old slave-owning society or the communal-tribal societies began to fall apart to give rise to new class relations and forms of state government. The political organization of feudal society grew from the hierarchical structure of landownership. It can be represented in the form of a social ladder, where those on the lower rungs came under those in the rungs above. At the top of the ladder were the feudal magnates—in a developed feudal society—who received their possessions from the supreme owner of all the land, the monarch. This structure resulted in landownership being relative in character. Three stages can be distinguished in the economic and political development of feudal society. During the early feudal period subsistence farming predominated and a number of small and unstable states were formed. The period of mature feudalism saw the flourishing of the feudal town with its concentration of artisan production. It was then, too, that nations began to be formed and the major feudal states came into existence. As feudalism finally went into decline capitalist socio-economic relations began to gradually develop. The political system characteristic of this period was the absolute monarchy. The ground was laid here for a leap in the development of productive forces with the advent of machine production. This late period also saw great geographical discoveries.

The Middle Ages were a time of continued strug-

gle between the feudal nobility and the peasants. This struggle began to make itself felt during the early period, gathered considerable force during the period of mature feudalism and as a rule was crowned during the late period with bourgeois revolutions.

Feudal society developed its own culture, which was quite distinct from the culture of the slave-owning society that came before it and from that of the early bourgeois society which followed it.

The Middle Ages saw the establishment of the three great religions of the world—Christianity, Islam and Buddhism, and these were to determine the spiritual and cultural life of society. During the period of mature feudalism new trends appeared in ideology and culture that were to a certain extent anticlerical and antifeudal. During the late period early bourgeois culture began to develop in a number of countries, and this showed a departure from the medieval religious outlook, in as much as it revealed an interest in man and his desire for scientific knowledge of the world.

In the history of the different continents, regions and countries, these general characteristics of feudalism, of course, had specific manifestations. In

examining the feudal societies of Western Europe, Central and Eastern Europe, including Russia, together with the feudal structures of Asia, America and Africa we see considerable individual and local features within the overall development. This, of course, is only to be expected if history is being considered not as a conventional scheme, but as a complex and contradictory process of the evolution of the economy, politics and culture.

This book has been written by a team of authors, each of whom is engaged in research in the country or region he describes.

The authors, while noting the research done by Soviet and foreign scholars, have based themselves primarily on source material. Thus they have given their own interpretation, which frequently represents a completely new viewpoint. They have not tried to give a systematic account of history, such as might be presented in a textbook. They have instead given an account of the most important and significant facts and phenomena, seeing the history of the medieval period as the real material and cultural life of generations of people, who lived then.

Victor Rutenburg

Chapter I

Feudal Society and Its Culture in Western Europe.

The Birth of Feudalism

Feudalism in Western Europe lasted more than one thousand years—a period during which the majority of modern European states and nations together with their languages, culture and traditions were formed.

Feudalism arose from the ashes of the world of antiquity and the crumbling primitive communal society, elements of which served as the building materials for the new economic and cultural system.

The universal character of West European feudalism does not mean that its individual and local manifestations in the various parts of the continent were the same. The new form of production, in which the small holding of the producer was subordinated to feudal ownership of the land, was common everywhere.

The transition to feudalism was historically progressive, but this does not mean that the peasants lived any better or that they were treated any better by the feudal overlords. In general, the epoch was characterized by violence, fanaticism and acute struggle between the peasants and the town-dwellers on the one hand and the feudal nobility on the other. But the long and complex evolution of feudal society—which began during the barbarian invasions, a period of almost total ignorance—brought Europe the first gleams of free thought, together with a distinctive style of poetry, painting, sculpture, architecture and science and eventually led to a new and more progressive social formation.

Thus the Middle Ages were not a period of complete obscurantism and cultural decline as the humanists of the 16th century and after them the historians of the 17th century thought. The Middle

Ages saw the birth, development and decline of the feudal formation, which spanned an enormous period from the 5th century to the 17th and 18th centuries, with vestiges of medieval customs and traditions lasting in some countries to the 19th and even the 20th centuries.

Therefore it is wrong to say that the medieval period ended in the mid- to late 15th century with, say, the discovery of America or the Fall of Constantinople. Feudal relations continued to remain dominant even though at that time new capitalist relations were beginning to develop in the economic field, politics and culture. The growth of manufacturing enterprises in industry, and of the capitalist renting system in agriculture, the increasing role of bourgeois elements in the absolutist states, the ideological explosion caused by the Reformation, and the unprecedented rise of culture during the Renaissance can only be understood in relation to the fact that they took place within what was still essentially a feudal system at a time when that system was going into decline and thereby creating in various spheres of social development the kind of revolutionary situation that led to a qualitative leap forward. It was this leap forward that resulted in the modern time, i.e. the new socio-economic formation—capitalism. The classical example of such a leap was the French Revolution in the late 18th century, although it might be said that the capitalist era began with the 16th century bourgeois revolution in the Netherlands.

Feudal elements in the late Roman Empire. The question arises: was the birth of the feudal formation in Western Europe accompanied

by a qualitative leap, i.e. a social revolution? On the eve of the Middle Ages almost the whole of Western Europe was ruled by the Roman Empire, whose possessions also included part of Africa and Asia. The main working force in the empire was slave labour with most of the slaves coming from the lands conquered by the Roman legions. These slaves were generally set to work in huge *latifundia*, the growth of which undermined the small and medium holdings of the free peasants. But at the same time it was only the free peasants who could fight in the Roman army. The slave-owning state was a colossus blown up to unbelievable proportions with something like 300,000 troops guarding its borders alone. But the reserves for the army were becoming rapidly exhausted. One might almost say that Rome was eating itself: the free peasants were becoming bankrupt, the army was getting smaller in numbers, while the slave-owning system required a continual flow of slaves from outside. By the late 2nd century A.D. this contradiction brought the slave-owning mode of production to a crisis. Not only was the number of slaves getting smaller, but the possibilities for the further development of production based on slave labour were exhausted. Technical improvements in agriculture, handicrafts and building were known on free holdings, and only to a very small degree in the slave-based sectors with the result that they became unprofitable. The economic and political situation made it essential to find a way out of this deadlock, and slaves were given small plots of land and equipment to farm it. Tools, working animals and some personal belongings (known as the slave's *peculium*) were now given over to the slave's individual use. Slaves treated in this manner now had a certain material incentive to work, since they only had to give to their masters part of the fruits of their labour or do a certain amount of work on their masters' land. But the slave-owner still had the right of ownership over the slave's property, and of course over the slave himself. Slaves allowed to work in this way did their farming with a certain amount of independence and were thus the forerunners of the medieval serfs.

The system of manumitting slaves was also extended. These *liberti* or freedmen also held land and remained under the patronage of their former masters as they were personally dependent on them. This, too, was characteristic of relations between

serf and master in the Middle Ages. The position of the *liberti* and the slaves allowed to till the land more and more approximated to that of the *coloni*—small-holders who performed small services for their masters. During the crisis of the slave-owning world, small private owners of land together with prisoners taken in war, who had once been given over to slavery, were made *coloni*. Now the *coloni* were tied to the land they farmed and their property was declared the property of their master. But definite limitations were placed upon their quit-rent. Also they had the right to sell their crops and could even serve in the army. Thus the *coloni* in terms of their position and rights, approximated to the status of the medieval serfs of the feudal period.

The condition of those who received the *precarium* (landed possessions granted to freemen) also began to approximate more and more during this period to that of the *coloni*. As they became bankrupt they began increasingly to need the patronage of the big landowners to whom they gave their land and from whom they received it back as holdings. This type of holding appears in the early feudal states all over Western Europe.

From the 3rd to the 5th century the slave-run *latifundia* slowly but steadily lost ground to the villas, which were broken up into small plots of land—parcels on which slaves, *liberti*, *coloni* and holders of the *precarium* lived and worked. The large landed estates were now combined with smaller holdings, which employed the labour of all kinds of agricultural workers. These changes in the agrarian structure of the later Roman Empire led to the embryonic production relations that were to become dominant in feudal society.

And in turn, these economic and social changes resulted in changes in the character of political power.

The division of the empire in the late 4th century into two parts—the Western and the Eastern Empire—was indicative of this. Gaul, Italy, Spain and Britain together with the Danube lands of Pannonia and Illyria formed the Western Roman Empire; the Balkans, Egypt, and Asia Minor became the Eastern Roman Empire or Byzantium. And separatist tendencies increased in each individual province as the dependence of the local authorities on the central government weakened. Furthermore, the big landowners were required to

gather taxes from the *coloni* and conscript them into the army for the benefit of the central ruling bodies. But the weakening of the central and provincial bodies made it necessary for the local landowners to form their own mercenary armies, defend their possessions with walls and towers, set up their own courts and maintain their own prisons. All of which led to a concentration of political power in the hands of the landowner-magnates, which was the characteristic feature of West European feudal society.

The fact that elements of feudal relations developed within the slave-owning society of the 4th and 5th centuries, the period of its decline, had led certain scholars to believe that the only source of the feudal system were the institutions of the later Roman Empire, which through a peaceful process of evolution developed into feudal institutions. Thus the slave-owning villa became the feudal estate and ancient private ownership became medieval private ownership. This hypothesis for the genesis of feudalism was put forward by the French historian, Fustel de Coulanges (1830-1889). Other historians have tried to find in the later Roman and early medieval periods a highly developed trading economy, which had led them to deny that the two formations were substantially different and thus affirm that there was no qualitative leap or social revolution involved in the transition from antiquity to the medieval period. Such a hypothesis has been put forward by the German historian, Alfons Dopsch (1868-1953).

The social revolution in the transition from antiquity to the Middle Ages. But these hypotheses do not accord with historical reality. The embryonic feudal relations, which appeared in the later Roman Empire, were not yet feudal relations proper either from the economic or the socio-political point of view. The *coloni* did indeed approximate to the medieval serfs, but they were not yet medieval serfs. The differences were quite considerable. In the methods by which they were exploited and the rights they possessed they differed little from slaves. Then, unlike feudal peasants, they were not attached to their landowners, but to the state system of economy and were therefore exploited by both. Unlike the medieval serfs again they had no commune organization which to a certain extent in the Middle Ages helped the former resist the feudal nobility. Finally, the *coloni* worked in a

slave-owning society in which physical labour was considered not merely unworthy of a free man, but a thing to be looked down upon.

Then again, the political power of the big landowners was highly relative and still in embryonic form. Far from all possessed their own armies and their courts and prisons were not considered legal by the state. Even their patronage was not officially endorsed by the law. Furthermore, the central government and municipal institutions had not yet lost their importance, their influence still being felt in the localities.

In such a situation the elements of feudalism, which had developed in the slave-owning society could not by themselves evolve into a new feudal formation. The transition to feudalism had to take place by means of a social revolution.

During the later centuries of its existence the Roman Empire began to come under increasing pressure from the barbarian tribes without and suffer the destructive force of uprisings staged by the *coloni* and the slaves within.

The strength of the barbarian tribes was made tangibly evident by the complete defeat of the Roman army at Adrianopolis in 378 A. D. in which the Emperor Valens was killed. The victors were the Visigoths, who three decades later, in 410 A. D. under the command of Alaric took Rome. This was the first time in its history that Rome had fallen. And it was a major political and psychological shock to the Roman world. Four decades later, in 455 A. D., the Vandals, who had entered Italy from North Africa where they had formed their kingdom, also sacked Rome. The Roman Empire still existed, but it was no longer impregnable. The leaders of the barbarian tribes now began to give their orders. Two decades after the Vandals had sacked Rome, in 476 A. D., Odoacer, the leader of the barbarian mercenaries, overthrew the last emperor of Western Rome, Romulus Augustulus. Rome was now completely in the hands of the Ostrogoths, who had first appeared in Italy in the late 5th century, and later the Langobardi, who entered Italy in the later 6th century, and finally in the late 8th century, the Franks.

The arrival of the barbarian tribes in Italy was not the usual type of military conquest. It had important socio-economic and political results. They dealt savage blows to the Roman Empire, to its sys-

tem and to the slave-owners. Thus, for instance, the Langobardi confiscated the land from the Roman landowners, frequently physically annihilating them in the process.

But the results of the barbarian invasions were not only destructive. They made a considerable contribution to the process of forming feudal relations. The communal-clan structure of the Germanic tribes which now occupied the territory of what was to become medieval Italy, France, Spain and Britain was also on the point of breaking up. Property inequality had developed together with the beginnings of private ownership of the land which resulted in the formation of a hereditary nobility and royal power. These phenomena strengthened from the 5th to the 8th century when the barbarian kingdoms were being formed. The Visigoths in what was to become France and Spain, the Vandals in North Africa, the Burgundians also in France, the Ostrogoths and the Langobardi in Italy, the Anglo-Saxons in Britain and the Franks in France.

An important role in the development of feudal relations was played by the broad strata of free commune-barbarians, who developed into feudal peasants, and by the Roman *coloni* and the ex-slaves that had been allowed to work the land. This was a synthesis of the later Roman and German social relations which resulted in qualitatively new feudal relations.

Thus the rudimental elements of feudalism, which had been formed in the communal society of the barbarians merged with similar elements formed in later Roman society. The process was highly contradictory and amounted to a qualitative leap that produced new social and economic relations.

These rudimentary elements could only develop into feudal relations after conquest thanks to the influence of the productive forces found in the conquered countries. All the events that took place in Western Europe from the 5th to the 8th century—the barbarian conquest of former Roman territory, the uprisings of the *coloni* and the slaves and the formation of the early feudal states represented a deep social revolution, a revolution that led to feudalism.

The emergence of feudal relations. The rate and level of development of feudal relations in the various early feudal states was everywhere different.

The kingdoms of the Franks, Burgundians and Visigoths saw the greatest synthesis between the later Roman and commune-barbarian feudal elements. But among the Ostrogoths and Vandals this synthesis did not produce particularly noticeable results, largely because of the short time these kingdoms existed. The interaction was less powerful and specific among the Langobardi and was almost totally absent among the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, where as a result of the weak romanization of Britain the Celtic population was not that much further advanced than their Anglo-Saxon conquerors. The weak development of the Roman agricultural system as has happened in a number of former Roman provinces—for instance, the territory of the Alemanni and the Bavari, internal German areas—meant slow feudalization. In Scandinavia the breakdown of the clan system took place without any interaction with elements of later Roman society and this resulted in a slow and highly specific development of feudal relations.

But despite these natural distinctions, the characteristic features of feudal relations can be found in all parts of Western Europe.

The most important was the formation of conditions for the feudal ownership of the land and its feudal holdings. By the late 6th century the communal land of the Franks had already become landed property—*allodium*—which could be inherited, sold or otherwise disposed of. Subsequently this process, in combination with later Roman land relations, led to the formation of the feudal conditions of land tenure. In the first half of the 8th century under the Carolingians the agrarian revolution which had begun earlier in Frankish society became stronger. The free members of the peasant community lost their *allodia* which resulted in a growth of large-scale landed property. The essential social characteristics of this revolution lay in the way in which free peasants were forced to become first dependent and subsequently bonded. The peasants' *allodia* came into the hands of their masters, but in the event of the peasants being given allotments, they were forced to pay for them in the form of quit-rent or corvée. The formation of feudal landed property and the enserfment of the peasants went on apace and thus the feudal system came into existence. This early feudal society consisted of two classes—the large-scale landowners and the de-

pendent peasants who had no land of their own. For this reason, the Frankish peasants were not materially able to do military service and it became necessary to reorganize the armed forces. Instead of the earlier practice of making gifts of the land, a new form of feudal holding—the *beneficium* was introduced under Charles Martel in the 8th century. This was, as a rule, a life endowment bestowed for service in the cavalry, but could be taken away if this service was not fulfilled. This reform was the result of the development of feudal relations and their official legalization.

During the 9th and 10th centuries the *beneficium* gradually became an hereditary possession, granted for service in war. In other words it acquired the characteristics of a feod. The feod was a developed form of feudal property and through the term “feudalism” it gave its name to the whole epoch. The feod was land granted by the feudal lord to his vassal and thus arose the system of vassalage. All the feudal lords together constituted the ruling class, who received from the serfs and dependent peasants rent in the form of *corvée*, *métayage* or quit-rent. Feudal rent was the economic product of feudal ownership of the land.

The structure of the new medieval society was formed from the new feudal estate and the peasant commune which was an indispensable part of it. Estates took up whole areas, but not infrequently, the lands of one owner alternated with those of another. The estate consisted of the domain, i. e. the lord's lands and the allotments (*mansus* or *hufe*) that were given over to the peasants. The estate economy did not destroy the peasant commune organization, even though it amounted to a community of bonded and dependent peasants. It was in fact a subsistence economy in which all the product was required within the estate itself and little left over for trading.

The large-scale landowner now became the holder of political power. The king in the early Middle Ages being still comparatively weak was forced to concede the relative independence of both the nobles and the Church and grant them immunity. This immunity legalized their political power, which they exploited as large-scale landowners. It also brought about the political decline of the Carolingian Empire, since it resulted in increased political independence for the feudal lords and in feudal

fragmentation which was characteristic of the early medieval period. Immunity was also a means for enslaving and increasing the exploitation of the peasants, which from the early Middle Ages led to a bitter struggle between the peasants and the feudal nobility.

The place and role of the Church in early feudal society. A role of considerable importance in Western Europe was played by religion and the Church. Originating as the religion of the impoverished masses during the decline of the Roman Empire, Christianity had already by the 2nd century A. D. begun to be used by the ruling classes as a factor of ideological influence on the population of Rome, made up as it was of various tribes. The emperor was virtually recognized as the head of the Christian Church. According to the Edict of Milan, 313 A. D., Christianity was declared the equal of the pagan cults and soon afterwards it became the dominant religion and thereby had a considerable influence on politics. The Western Christian Church became known as the “Catholic” or universal church. The role of the bishops, who changed from leaders of the Christian communities into governors of towns and regions, also increased. In the late 4th-early 5th centuries the Bishop of Rome called himself the Pope, the head of the whole Catholic Church, the successor of St. Peter and Christ's deputy on earth. In 325 the First Council of Nicaea made the dogma of the Holy Trinity an article of faith. The One God now consisted of three persons: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. In the same century the Alexandrian priest, Arius, objected to this official dogma, by claiming that Christ could not be equal to God the Father, who begat him. Arianism became a powerful heresy that was virtually opposed to the official Church and the state, and therefore the barbarian tribes who were fighting against the Roman Empire tended to adopt it.

The rulers of the early feudal states used the ideological and political power of the Church to strengthen their own power. In the mid-8th century a political and economic alliance was struck between the lay power of the Frankish state and the Church to the extent that majordomo Pippin the Short, who at Soissons in 751 had been proclaimed King of the Franks, recognized all church lands given in the form of a *beneficium* as the property of the Church.

The beneficiaries payed the Church, but did their service to the king. Furthermore, Pope Stephen II sanctioned Pippin's seizure of power, for which the newly crowned king, who had taken the province of Rome and the exarchate of Ravenna from the Langobardi, granted the Pope in 756 A. D. a Papal State. From that time on the *navicula* of St. Peter has voyaged independently over the waves of politics, continuing its journey to the present day as the city-state of the Vatican. With the luck of Pippin the Carolingian Dynasty continued its policy of close links with the Pope of Rome. Also in the 8th century a document was drawn up claiming that the Emperor Constantine had given the Pope in the 4th century the right to Rome, Italy and the whole of the West. This version was justly doubted by the medieval writers, and was later refuted by the Italian humanists of the Renaissance.

A policy of uniting with the Church and the Pope of Rome was also pursued by the German kings, who tried to get the Church to serve them. Thus in the 10th century Otto I and Otto II made abundant gifts of land to the Church together with extensive privileges of immunity. But the investiture of all the bishops and abbots practically passed into the hands of the king. Furthermore, the church dignitaries conducted diplomatic and administrative functions in the royal state apparatus and even served in the army. Thus the Church was at the service of the king, who later became emperor, and, hence, the Church, too, received the designation "imperial".

Relations between the imperial power and the Church, however, worsened in the 11th century when the Popes began to dispute the right of the emperor to investiture. But even before this in the Monastery of Cluny in French Burgundy there had been a movement to strengthen the Church and its moral prestige. The Cluniac movement, as it was called, demanded strict observance of celibacy, the end of simony (the selling of clerical offices) and the release of the Church from its subordination to lay kings. The Popes, naturally, supported the Cluniac movement. Brother Hildebrand, the monk who in 1073 became Pope Gregory VII, began the practical implementation of the Cluny programme. Even before he was elected Pope, the Lateran Council had established a new system for papal elections. The Pope was to be elected by cardinals—the high-

est dignitaries of the Church—without the intervention of the Emperor or any other lay rulers. This system has been maintained till the present day. At the same council lay investiture was also done away with and henceforth all bishops and abbots were appointed by the Pope alone.

These independent acts on the part of the Church resulted, of course, in countermeasures from the emperor. Henry IV deposed Pope Gregory VII. The Pope in his turn excommunicated Henry IV and deprived him of his royal office, thereby releasing his subjects from their oath of allegiance. The German feudal nobility were not slow to exploit this and rebelled against the king. This forced Henry IV together with a small entourage to leave for Italy to see Pope Gregory, where, as the chroniclers relate, he was made to strip off his royal regalia and stand barefoot for three days outside the Castle of Canossa and then get down on his knees and beg the Pope's forgiveness. But even when this was granted and the king returned with his position strengthened, he still continued to oppose the Pope. The long struggle between the empire and the Papacy ended with the compromise Concordat of Worms in 1122 A. D., which did away with the imperial Church in Burgundy and Italy, but maintained it to a certain extent in Germany. The Christian religion, the Church and the papacy continued to play an important role throughout the Middle Ages. And this role was increased or reduced depending on the specific historical factors obtaining in the various West European states.

The evolution of the early feudal state.

During the barbarian invasions state power existed among the Germanic tribes only in embryonic form. But the conquest of new territories resulted in increased property and class differentiation, which in turn hastened the process of state formation. An important role here was played by the vestiges of the Roman state system and particularly the Roman territorial system. The Roman administrative system was particularly visible in the kingdom of the Ostrogoths with its king and subordinate Senate. A number of barbarian states also used the Roman tax system and for a while the currency system also. In the Frankish kingdom, on the other hand, particularly north of the Loire, vestiges of the old tribal organization remained. But the barbarian kingdoms differed in one great respect from the later

Roman Empire—they were not slave-owning states, but early feudal.

Thus the Frankish state saw the formation of the basic feudal classes, which subsequently led to the emergence of an early feudal state. In this case the chief of the Merovingian tribe came to rule over not only his own tribesmen, but all the population of conquered Roman Gaul. Thus through the conquest of other tribes there eventually came a moment when a tribal warlord became a king. The king was, of course, the greatest landowner, but other big landowners had a stake in keeping him and the state strong, for the new state protected their property. His power as yet was far from being sovereign and therefore many questions that concerned the state were discussed at meetings of the biggest landowners convoked by the king. Tribal divisions of the land became territorial units headed by a count as the king's appointee, while the smaller divisions of land, called "hundreds" where popular councils were still held, came under the control of the royal *centenarium*.

The foreign expansion of the Frankish kings resulted in a considerable increase in the territory of their state which included the kingdom of the Langobardi, part of Spain, Saxony, Bavaria and Carinthia. In size their state could be compared with the former Western Germanic Empire. In 800 A.D. Charlemagne was crowned emperor by the Pope in

the St. Peter Cathedral in Rome. Thus a new empire appeared in the West that within a few years was recognized by Byzantium. But this huge empire was comprised of too many different nationalities at different levels of social and economic development. Order throughout the empire and along its borders was maintained by military force. The whole system of state was extremely primitive. Twice a year a council of the biggest landowners was held at which edicts, known as *capitularies*, were passed. The organs of local government were controlled by imperial envoys. At the same time the individual counts began to be less concerned with their state duties than with their private affairs with the result that they became not so much royal appointees as hereditary feudal barons. But the temporary centralization of Charlemagne's empire had an unsound basis. The early feudal empire encouraged the development of feudalism in the conquered territories which resulted in the growth of large estates and the enslavement of the peasants. But this, in turn, generally led to a strengthening of the power of the individual feudal barons and consequently to the ultimate political break-up of the empire. In 843 the Treaty of Verdun was signed whereby Charlemagne's empire was divided into its three already historically formed parts that would later become France, Italy and Germany.

The Varied Forms of Early Feudalism

Early feudal France. In the early Middle Ages France stretched from the Channel in the north to the Rhone, the Saone and the Maas in the East. This, at any rate, was the extent of the country under the Treaty of Mersen, 870 A.D., after the fall of Charlemagne's empire. By the 10th century the early stage of feudalism had been completed and the various ethnic elements that formed the population of ancient Gaul had merged.

In ancient times the south-west was inhabited by the Iberians and Aquitani. Then the Iberian tribe called the Vascons appeared there, mixed with the Aquitani and began to be called Gascons. The Romans called the Celtic tribes that had lived here previously Gauls. After the Roman conquest of Gaul a new Gaulish-Roman nationality developed

speaking a dialect of Latin which eventually ousted Celtic as a language.

Gaul was not Romanized everywhere equally. The Romans first appeared on the Mediterranean coast and began to open up the lands where once centuries before the Phoenicians and Greeks had lived. The province of Narbonne was famed for its rich Roman towns, where the highly Romanized Gallic nobility lived. The south-west was Romanized much more weakly, part of the population here not merging at all. In Aquitania there were no large regions that were Romanized. Poitou and Gasconne were almost completely free of Roman influence and the Romanizing of the north-eastern provinces was highly superficial.

The most important occupation of the popula-

tions in the Romanized areas was growing grain crops and grapes and making oil, activities which had flourished from the time of the Greek colonists. The economy was helped by the stone-surfaced Roman roads linking the major ancient towns, of which in the 5th century there were more than one hundred. Trade and various handicraft industries flourished in these towns.

By the early 5th century Gaul had already been subjected to barbarian invasions from the Vandals, the Suebi, the Alani and the Visigoths with their kingdom in Toulouse. In the middle of that century the Burgundians settled along the Saone and Rhone valleys which subsequently became the kingdom of Arles Burgundy (Arelate). The Armorica peninsula was settled by the Britons fleeing from the Anglo-Saxons, from which it takes the name Bretagne. By the mid-6th century the Franks had become masters of northern Gaul. Soon they formed the Frankish kingdom, the political centre of which moved to Germany in the 7th century.

From the 6th to the 8th century the process of forming feudal landed property strengthened in Gaul. The peasants lost ownership of the land and henceforth were required to give payment either in money or in kind for the use of it. The Gaulish-Roman *coloni* and the former Germanic commune peasants merged into a single social stratum—the serfs. These were dependent on their feudal baron, who owned everything except their own personal holdings.

A considerable cause for the impoverishment of the peasants was the continuous wars that took place and the direct violence practised upon them by the big landowners. This only increased the social differentiation that was taking place in nascent Gallic feudal society. After the fall of the Merovingian kingdom of Clovis and its division into parts, that which subsequently became France consisted of Neustria, Burgundy and Aquitania, each of which were relatively close in terms of the development of feudal relations. But under the rule of the later Carolingians only Neustria and the Duchy of Burgundy remained, since Aquitania had once more become independent.

The new state of early feudal France was formed under the extreme conditions of internal strife and foreign invasion. Particularly savage were the Normans from Scandinavia, whose hordes, since the

weakened Carolingian kings were unable to resist them, got almost as far as Paris where they were eventually stopped by the stronger counts of Paris. These latter held Neustria but its north-western part they were forced to yield in the early 10th century to the invaders who formed here the Duchy of Normandy. Subsequently the invaders adopted the local language and the French feudal system.

The struggle for the crown of France which was waged between the Carolingians and the counts of Paris culminated in 987 with the coronation of Hugh Capet (from the Robertian line). The Capetians (and their relatives Valois and Bourbons) held the French throne right down to the 18th century. Thus ancient Gaul and the Western kingdom of the Franks became France. A small nucleus of fruitful lands between the Seine and the Loire containing such important strategic points as Paris and Orleans, which formed the original kingly *domaine*, gradually developed into a large state. The almost independent counties and duchies, however, still continued to exist, but were considered vassals of the king as the supreme suzerain and head of the feudal hierarchy. This feudal fragmentation was increased also by the presence of two ethnic groups in France—the north-French and the south-French, or Provençals. Until the 13th century the south-French were virtually completely independent.

This period of feudal fragmentation was not the result of accidental coincidence between foreign and domestic history. It was part of the law-governed evolution of feudal relations. The earliest stage saw no less extensive, though unstable amalgamation, than the previously mentioned empire of Charlemagne. Its existence had its own historical logic—it served the formation and expansion of feudal relations over a large part of the territory of Western Europe. This was then followed by a period of feudal fragmentation—the formation and development of relatively small political amalgamations like counties, duchies and principalities. It was a period in which feudal relations were stabilized and deepened.

During this period the French peasantry became largely bonded. The early feudal French serf fell into personal, agricultural and legal dependence upon his seignior, the lord who owned the feudal estate.

Inasmuch as he was personally dependent on his master the serf was required to pay a number of

taxes: capitation tax (*capitatio*), marriage tax (*foris-maritagium*) if entering into marriage with the serf of another lord, and mortmain (*manus mortua*), a tax on inherited wealth, since all property of the serf was considered as belonging to the master. There were also death duties (*mortuarium*) to pay, which might mean a peasant having to surrender to his lord one of his prize cattle. The lord was also entitled to demand unlimited payments and services, known as *la taille à merci*.

As the hereditary holder of an allotment of land the serf had to work three days a week in the *domaine* fields, perform various services connected with transportation and building and make small monetary payments.

Being legally dependent, the serf could be tried at the local court (*curia*), which could impose taxes and fines.

Since the master had a monopoly over all mills, wine presses and bakeries—the right of banality—the serfs were required to pay in kind, or occasionally in money, for their use.

Since all the land on an estate belonged to the lord, the serf was also required to pay for the use of roads, bridges, ferries, markets as well as for woods, meadows and waters.

Not all the French peasants of the early medieval period were serfs. Part of the peasantry retained their freedom. These were called villeins, but they were obliged to their lord as holders of his land.

In early medieval France the political structure of the feudal hierarchy was formed according to the principle of landownership. At the top of the pyramid stood the king, whose immediate vassals were the dukes and the counts. Their vassals in turn were the major feudal lords, and their vassals again were the smaller feudal knights. The vassal was subordinate to his master and obliged to serve him, while the master in turn was obliged to offer his protection. In reality, of course, vassalage was more complex and not so schematic, but it became the main military-political structure of feudal society. The social pyramid embraced all the feudal nobility and united them into a single class which on the whole stood opposed to the class of serfs and dependent peasants. This opposition was characteristic of the whole period of feudalism: through their complete right of landownership the feudal nobility were paid rent by the peasants in the form of labour,

goods or money. The struggle on the part of the peasants to reduce these payments not infrequently led to armed uprisings, the earliest of which took place in Normandy in the late 10th century and in Bretagne in the early 11th century. This resistance was not entirely without result as the level of feudal rent was to some extent reduced with the aid of established *coutumes* (customary law). This made it possible for the peasant to develop his personal holding, and consequently to develop the productive forces of early feudal society. This was the more so since the most substantial improvements in the early medieval period took place on the peasant holdings. The three-field system began to be used, winter and spring crops began to be alternated and repeated ploughing introduced. All of this increased the sowing area and improved the quality of the land and consequently improved the quality of the crops. Although on the whole spelt tended to predominate over rye and barley, in the Paris region wheat was the main crop both on the manorial and on the peasant holdings. The heavy wheeled plough, which cut the soil horizontally was invented. Market gardening, which produced cucumbers, cabbage, beetroot, radishes and pumpkins, began to be extensively developed. Hemp, flax, leguminous plants and grapes became common. The science of horticulture was developed. On the monasterial and royal estates where the flocks ran into many thousands stock farming was practised. Here pig rearing and sheep farming were predominant, since quantitatively speaking cattle took second place, inasmuch as they tended to be reared only as draught animals (oxen). Naturally, for military purposes the royal estates bred horses, whose quality was improved through breeding with Spanish and Arabian horses. Increasing the area of pasture land and hay reserves meant draining the marshes and clearing the forests. The army required not only horses, but also weapons—axes, spears, swords, armour and various cloths. After the fall of the Roman cities all this was manufactured by local handicraftsmen as were agricultural implements like heavy ploughs, etc.

Early medieval France saw the development of a distinctive culture. The towns in the later Roman period already on the threshold of feudalism had a high degree of literacy with Latin and Greek literature being studied. Massilia (Marseilles) was famous for the practice of medicine. Augustodunum

(Autun) was known for its school of rhetoric, where in the 4th century the orator Eumenius was the leading light. Burungalum (Bordeaux) was famous as the home of the poet Ausonius and in the 5th century of the poet Sidonius Apollinaris.

During the Carolingian period the monasteries of Tours and Corbie were famed for their master scribes who developed the clear Carolingian minuscule, examples of which have lasted to our day. This script was used to transcribe the works of many of the ancient writers which together with the works of the Church fathers and the ancient chronicles formed whole libraries in the larger monasteries. But the Carolingian Renaissance, as it is called, could not substantially affect the cultural life of Western Europe. It was a spark which soon died. The Carolingian era brought with it an expansion of ecclesiastical and monastery building. It was during this period that abbeys like St. Riquier and St. Wandrille were built. Ultimately, however, it was not the revived Latin literature which dominated, but the Romance colloquial language in which in 842 the text of the Oath of Strasbourg was written.

Thus from the 5th to the 11th century an early feudal society was formed with its economy, political structure, culture, habits, psychology and world outlook.

France can be considered a classic example of a feudal country in terms of the precision and clarity with which the feudal system was formed. Other countries naturally had their own specifics, though on the whole these did not depart from the general characteristics of the period.

Italy, Spain, Britain, Germany and Scandinavia in early feudal period. Like France almost all the other countries of Western Europe suffered barbarian invasions, and the emergence of early feudal relations through a synthesis of the dying elements of antiquity and the late communal system of the barbarian tribes. But these factors had a varied influence on the different countries.

In Italy, the central part of the former Roman Empire, the influence of later Roman society was obviously the strongest. This in the first place meant that the early feudal peasantry tended to consist of bonded serfs and *aldiones*, who mostly were forced to do unlimited *corvée*. These conditions also affected the status of the *coloni* and *massarii*, who had be-

come virtually bonded holders, for despite the agreed relations they had with their feudal lords, they had very little personal freedom and were forced to perform a considerable amount of *corvée* and pay quit-rent. On the other hand, there was broadish strata of peasants whose conditions of dependence were fairly light due to the not inconsiderable influence of the Langobardian peasant-commune traditions. These were the *libellarii*, who had their holdings chiefly on a money-rent contract. This resulted in them having a relatively higher level of commodity-money relations than other countries. During the 9th and 10th centuries the practice of paying rent in money here began to considerably outweigh rent in kind. Another group of peasants who were free were the allodialists. Bonded serfs were obliged to work in their masters' fields four to five days a week. Agricultural technology in early medieval Italy in the best cases reached the relatively high level of Roman times.

The feudal class, too, had its own distinctive characteristics due largely to the virtual absence in Italy of kingly power and the failure of the vassal system to develop extensively. The Italian feod could be divided among descendants and even be completely alienated. The vassal was rarely required to enter into military service and the land transferred to the feod was registered as libellarian hold. Domain lands were considerably reduced by the 10th century and many feudal families took up residence in the towns. This resulted in a lack of consolidation among the feudal class of the kind that had taken place in France.

Spain also was characterized by the interaction of the later Roman and German agrarian systems. Even during the time of the barbarian invasions the Roman-type villages had not only arable lands but also meadows and woods that belonged to individual persons. But the system of granting *beneficia* was almost unknown in the formation of the large landed estates in the kingdom of the Visigoths. Magnates were in the conditional possession of the land granted them by the king. The commune played an important role in early medieval Spain and this resulted in distinctive forms of peasant dependence on feudal lords according to which the collective commendation of members of the commune took place on the condition of their actually retaining their personal freedom to a greater extent

than among the peasants of France and other West European countries of the period. These interrelations were formed on the basis of a voluntary agreement and the resultant peasant commune bore the name *behetria* and had sufficiently high privileges such as the right to elect its own seignior. The peasant members of the *behetria* were subsequently required to perform military service for their seignior and hence they were relatively dependent on him. But this dependence was never as burdensome as the French *servage*. There was also a stratum of free small holders in early medieval Spain which coexisted with the basic feudal strata. Unlike France, the hierarchical structure of landed property and political office did not develop into so complete a form. *Beneficia* did not become fiefs and there was no interweaving of the *beneficium* and vassalage. The early medieval period in Spain was very long, which was largely due to the Arab conquest of the country and the complex process of its reconquest. Feudalism in Islamic Spain had an even more distinctive character, many of the peasants being free from personal dependence. Furthermore, estates of the classical French type in which the direct producers were exploited by the state tended not to be formed.

Like Spain, the peasant commune in early feudal England also lasted for a long time. The process whereby the free peasantry gradually became dependent also took a long time as did the formation of the large feudal estates. This is explained by the fact that the Roman system which had been virtually destroyed under the barbarian invasions had had only a very weak effect as well as by the fact that the Angles, Saxons, Jutes and Friesians who flooded into Britain were at a lower level of socio-economic development than the Franks and Burgundians who had settled in France. The emergence of private ownership of the land among the Anglo-Saxons took place more slowly than among the Franks, while the process by which the free members of the commune, the *ceorls*, became bonded serfs went on for centuries. There was virtually no interaction in England between the later Roman system and the dying peasant-commune relations. As distinct from other parts of the Roman Empire there were virtually no elements of feudal development like the *coloni*, the patronate and others. The Danish and Norwegian invasions and conquests

which began in the late 8th century resulted in the king's power being strengthened and in the formation in the 9th century of a knights' army. In the 10th century the Danish invasions were stepped up and they succeeded in conquering part of the country. But social relations developed slowly among the Danes; therefore in the areas of the Dane law feudalization was very restrained and consequently there remained a fairly large substratum of free peasantry. In the early 11th century England was made part of a single state with Norway and Denmark, but Danish assimilation in England led to the crown being transferred to the Anglo-Saxon kings. The Danish invasions ruined more and more peasants, leaving many landless so that by the 11th century the ordinary allotment had been quartered (*virgate*). Wars with the Danes led to an increase in the number of knights, local small-scale feudal lords, who now formed the bulk of the ruling class. The big landowners continued with their seizure of lands and received rights of immunity—*soke*—which allowed them to enserf the peasants, called *sokemen*. These latter at first were considered to have freedom of person, possess their own land and be dependent on the feudal lord only in legal matters, but in time they became increasingly under his control. Complete centralization and the advance into full feudalism came after the Norman conquest in the 11th century.

The formation of feudal relations in Germany during the early medieval period was somewhat belated. The Roman occupation had only been in the western part of the lands of such German tribes as the Alemanni, the Saxi, the Bavari, the Thuringi and the Hessians and only for a short period at that, on the very threshold of the medieval period. Therefore, the formation of feudal relations occurred without any significant influence from the Roman slave-owning system. This was true even of the areas that had been under Roman control, while in the remaining lands the Roman system had no influence whatsoever. The breakdown of the commune system among the German tribes led to the emergence of feudal relations: the formation of the feudal estate and the development of a substratum of dependent peasants who were obliged to pay their lord in the form of *corvée* and quit-rent. The latter consisted largely of providing food, fowl, cattle and handicrafts. The *corvée* consisted in working in the

fields, in the forests, transporting, building and serving in the manor. There was also a tithe owed to the Church, which could be collected by the priests or by the landlord. A heavy inheritance tax, like the mortmain in France, called *Todfall* or occasionally *Dreiteiligkeit* (third part), since the lord took a third of the property, also had to be paid. In the north-west there was the practice of exacting a capitation tax and the not infrequent practice of driving the peasants off land which they owed and returning it to the lender known as the *meier*. In the east the peasants lived far more freely, since the feudal lords and monasteries that held the land in this area needed a workforce. But by the 14th century even their position had worsened.

The feudal hierarchy in Germany had seven ranks—sceptres. The first was in the hands of the emperor or king, the second—with the church nobility, the third—with the lay nobility, the fourth—with the barons, the fifth—with the knights, the sixth—with the knights' vassals and the seventh—with the freemen. When a feod (*Lehne*) was received various ceremonies, known as homage or commendation and investiture (various types of vassal agreements) took place, the symbols of which were the banner for the lay vassals and the sceptre for those in the clergy.

The political development was characterized by the slow formation of the early feudal state. Prior to the 10th century tribal duchies like Bavaria, Swabia, Franconia, Saxonia and Thuringia still remained, and this tribal fragmentation put a break on the country's development. But the medium- and large-scale landowners needed a powerful state, as did the monasteries and bishoprics. The formation of such a state took place in Germany in the 10th century.

The most distinctive form of early feudalism, however, was found in Scandinavia. Here communal-clan relations continued to play an important role right up to the early medieval period. In the 8th and 9th centuries the land was still under the hereditary ownership of single families, while the pastures, meadows and forests were owned by everyone. The breakdown of the communal-clan system was stepped up during the period of the Viking expansion when trading, conquering and plundering expeditions were continually being launched abroad. The warrior chiefs (*konings*) became kings

and dealt out land and privileges. Between the 9th and the 11th century Sweden, Norway and Denmark became kingdoms, although as yet these amalgamations were far from stable. Thus in the early 11th century the Danish King claimed his realm to include not only Norway, but also England, although this artificial union did not last long. With the development of private ownership of the land in Scandinavia social delimitation increased and the process of feudalization began. Early feudalism in Scandinavia was purely the result of the internal break-up of the communal system and took place almost without external influence. For this reason the emergence of feudalism there was an extremely difficult time. In Denmark it lasted from the 9th to the 13th century and in Sweden a whole century more. The possibilities for agriculture in Scandinavia were extremely limited with the emphasis mainly being placed on stock-rearing, hunting, fishing and sailing. In Norway the small farming communities were scattered far from each other as was more or less the case in Sweden. In Denmark villages were common. In these conditions the size of a feudal lord's tillage was small and so consequently was his power. The peasant living on the feudal lord's land did not, as in other West European countries, have the right of lifelong and hereditary use of the land. An allotment of land could be given to a peasant for a number of years and then taken away. Such a peasant, however, did not lose his personal freedom. He was still defended by the laws and the *tings* or meetings of the local peasants under arms—a thing which the peasants could not do in any of the other West European countries. Nevertheless, the unwritten code of feudal morals made the peasant unequal and of lower social standing. Furthermore, the peasants were burdened with various kinds of obligations to both the state and the church. There was military service, guard duty and the obligation to build and equip boats for the royal fleet and to serve in the fleet. In their travels around the country the kings had the right to expect that the peasants would provide them with food. The right to collect this food was given to courtiers, who thereby became feudal landowners. This led to an increase in the number of peasants who became dependent landowners. In Sweden and Denmark in the 12th and 13th centuries the knights' social estate was formed, although the status of their feods

was more like that of a *beneficium* than a *Lehne*.

Despite the naturally varied conditions that resulted from the different social, economic and geo-

graphical situations, all countries of Western Europe passed through the first stage of the feudal social formation during the early medieval period.

The Feudal Town

The heritage of the ancient towns. There were towns and cities in antiquity, but the feudal equivalents had their own economic, social and cultural distinctions. The ancient towns and cities, like the capital of the empire, Rome—the Eternal City—were in fact far from being eternal. As military, administrative and cultural centres, they were also the places where commercial and financial relations were concentrated. But the successive waves of barbarian invasions coupled with the break-up of the slave-owning state almost resulted in these towns and cities becoming completely desolate. Many towns were either totally deserted or their populations drastically reduced. Such that remained became agrarianized, with their populations engaged in cattle-rearing and farming. These subsequently became the bases for the feudal towns and cities, for the presence of city walls and stone temples, palaces, houses, churches and prisons made such places natural sites for the rapid formation of towns and cities during the feudal period.

This was the case, for example, in Italy, where Roman cities like Lucca, Pisa, Piacenza, Pavia and Milan continued to exist as centres of trade. In some of these the minting of money had never ceased. Even under the Langobardi kingdom (568-773), town and city life still flourished in Italy. There were towns and cities in France which were either administrative centres or fortresses, or residencies for the high clergy.

The early feudal towns in Italy, southern France and Spain. The first medieval centres of commerce and handicrafts made their appearance in Italy, southern France and Spain during the 9th and 10th centuries. This was due not only to the weak flame of commodity-money relations that had still burned in them since ancient times, but to their geographical position. As a rule, they were coastal towns or trading centres that had traditionally traded with Byzantium and the Levant, towns like Amalfi, Naples, Ancona, Pisa, Genoa and Venice in Italy

and Marseilles, Montpellier, Narbonne, Arles, Montauban and Toulouse in France. In Spain the Muslim conquest led to a breakdown of urban life in a number of areas and some of the towns and cities were completely destroyed, but the first victories under the reconquest brought about the restoration of many of these as well as the founding of new cities. By the early 9th century a number of fortresses had been built in Castile and the city of Leon had been founded. The later half of the 9th century saw the emergence of Burgos. By the early 11th century market trading was being conducted in Leon. There had been a lot of internal trade in Muslim Spain, where the town functioned as the economic centre of an agrarian district. Both in Spain and in Italy the town controlled a broad area adjacent to it (known as *contado* in Italy and *alfoz* in Spain). Despite their frequently ancient origins, the early feudal towns were a new socio-economic phenomenon in Western Europe. And the appearance of the town not only testified to this new phenomenon but was also a qualitatively important leap towards a new stage in the socio-economic formation—mature or developed feudalism. The socio-economic nature of the feudal town consisted in the fact that it became a centre for handicrafts and trade, a development that resulted from the slow and protracted growth of productive forces from the 5th to the 10th centuries and which led to the separation of handicrafts from agriculture. This phenomenon was due to agricultural handicrafts, which had served the needs of farming, being transformed into a special branch of production that developed and strengthened independently. It grew and developed alongside farming and stock-breeding and increased agricultural productivity that was the result of better implements and higher yields. This, naturally, led to the need to exchange surplus agricultural products for craftsmen's articles. But the process of exchange was difficult so long as the artisan remained an agricultural producer and under the power

of the feudal lord. Therefore, they tried to get away from the latter and gathered together in places that were favourable for commerce (such as the intersections of roads and waterways, at bridges, castles, monasteries or outside the walls of ancient cities) and formed guilds of relatively free producers. The town, as a centre of commodity production, had a considerable influence on the development of commercial and financial relations in the village. Simple commodity production was not alien to feudalism—it was within the regularities governing its general development.

The feudal town from the 11th to the 15th century. The transition to the period of mature feudalism in Western Europe and the concomitant rise of the feudal town began in the 11th century. It extended over the next two centuries and saw the development of more and more feudal towns. In Germany as in the Romance countries the first feudal towns had once been Roman centres that had deteriorated into small settlements like Cologne (Colonia Agrippina) or Regensburg (Regina Castra). These towns had kept their stone turreted walls, their bridges, their aqueducts and even on occasion their paved roads. But the majority of German towns grew up anew near castles or monasteries, like Münster; near the sources of rivers, like Paderborn, or their lower reaches, like Bremen and Hamburg; near fords, like Frankfurt am Main and Frankfurt an der Oder; or near bridges, like Zweibrücken or Bruges in Flanders. By the 12th century there were already several hundred towns and cities in Germany. Encircled by a wall with turrets and gates the town was extremely limited in area. Its streets were narrow and uneven and frequently the upper stories of houses hung over the lower stories. The growth of such cities in subsequent centuries is attested to by new and increasingly wider walls that encircled new streets and suburbs. Thus in Florence there were three rings of walls. At night the city gates were locked.

Even in towns that had formerly been Roman it was characteristic that the medieval town extended beyond the old walls. This was the case, for example, in many towns in Germany like Cologne as well as in other countries like France, where new medieval settlements arose in places that were more suitable for trade than the ancient inaccessible fortresses, places like Paris or Lyons.

Beyond the city walls there were fields, orchards, market gardens and meadows and not infrequently within them as well. Here they kept pigs, sheep, goats and even cattle. In Rome, for example, there was a guild of citizens who bred and sold bulls. Pigs, sheep and goats sometimes fed and grazed inside the city, since food and rubbish was often thrown onto the streets. This practice often resulted in the spread of diseases like smallpox, typhoid, plague and cholera, particularly since prior to the building of paved roads in the 13th and 14th centuries the roads would become rivers of mud during the autumn rains and dust bowls in the summer heat. It is not hard to believe the description of the medieval chroniclers that not only pedestrians were in danger of drowning on the city streets, but riders on horseback as well, as was the case, for example, with the Emperor Friedrich III. The terrible “black death”, which as described by Boccaccio in *The Decameron* carried off more than half the population of Western Europe in 1348, was particularly virulent among the urban population living as they were in close and unsanitary conditions.

The average population of a town was between five and ten thousand. Those cities that had 40,000 to 50,000 inhabitants, like London or Toulouse in the 14th century, were considered large. Only a few cities—Paris, Seville, Cordoba, Milan, Venice and Florence—had populations of between 80,000 and 100,000.

The towns were usually centred around their marketplace, their administrative buildings (the *Rathaus* in Germany, the *hotel de ville* in France, the *podesta* in Italy) and their church or cathedral. Outside the government palace general meetings of all free and equal citizens (known as *burdings* in Germany and *parlamento* in Italy) were held. Sometimes these meetings were stopped by the lay or clerical lord on whose land the town stood. In Italy and Germany this lord was often a bishop, who from the time of Otto I had been considered a prince and who ruled the town and its outlying district, holding the courts, exacting taxes and levying the people's militia. The economic and political monopoly of the lord led to great difficulties in the development of trade and handicrafts, for all the benefits were reaped almost exclusively by him alone. Artisan commodity production required a considerable amount of freedom for the artisans and the trad-

ers and this was the reason for the long and ultimately victorious struggle of the townsfolk to do away with or curtail the lord's rights, which not infrequently took the form of urban uprisings. This struggle first began in Italy in 829 when the townsfolk rose against the Bishop of Cremona. This struggle, it must be stressed, was against the bishop as a feudal lord, not as a representative of the Church. Later from the 10th to the 12th centuries many towns succeeded in doing away with or reducing the rights of their lords or bishops. In Germany the struggle took place in the 12th and particularly the 13th century with the monarch (in Germany the emperor and in France the king) often taking sides against the lord so as to reap the benefits of having such towns as his allies. In their struggle for economic and political rights the German towns won for themselves the proclamation of a rule *Stadluft macht frei* (literally: "city air makes free"). This rule gave a runaway peasant who had spent a period of one year and one day in a town the right to live as a free man. Instead of rule by the lord there arose in these towns republican governing bodies which, while not being democratic, represented the interests of the rich merchants, house-owners, moneylenders and landowners, known as *Ausbürger* who from the 15th century onwards were called the "patriciate".

In France and Italy the movement of citizens against the feudal lords led to the formation of urban communes. The first of such in France to receive a commune's charter was the town of Cambray in 1072. Sometimes, as in the case of the northern French town of Lannes the citizens actually bought the right to have a self-governing commune. This occurred in 1106 at the beginning of a long and fierce struggle against the Bishop Godfrey. In some places there were armed uprisings and other dramatic events lasting a whole century.

From the 10th to the 12th century a number of Italian towns were granted the right to be communes, which gave them political power and economic privileges. These communes were governed by the Grand Council (*Gran Consiglio*) which consisted of well-to-do citizens and by consuls as executive power. This meant that all matters relating to trade, handicrafts, the markets, the minting of money, the levying of troops, the artisan and merchant guilds and the courts were decided by the wealthy

citizens, who were known in Florence as the *popolo grasso* (the fat people). The feudal lord was now limited to receiving a specific rent as well as a certain amount of military aid from the town. These rights, which were endorsed in charters, were achieved through the real strength of the citizens and they resulted in the economic, political and cultural flourishing of the Italian cities during the 12th-15th centuries. Even the twenty-year war waged by Friedrich Barbarossa and the German feudal lords against the Italian communes in the 12th century could not bring them down.

The urban guilds. The economic and political organization of the towns was based on the guild system. The guilds were the main professional, political and religious organizations of the townsfolk. The guilds also had military functions, acted as a fire service and did guard duty. They took care of the sick members and of the orphans and widows of members. In the majority of West European countries the guild consisted of full-fledged masters, apprentices who were paid by the masters, and learners who paid for training over a two-year period (which was sometimes stretched to 7 or 8 years, or even 10 or 12). After serving his time the learner became an apprentice. His pay was set by the guild charter, which also determined the political organization, the processes of production and the living standards of the guild members. The pay was low, while the working day in the summer could be as long as twelve or even fifteen hours. After serving a required period the apprentice presented a trial sample of his work (masterpiece), organized a feast for his guild masters, hence the German name of this handicraft association *Zeche* (in France—*métier*, in Italy—*arte*), and became a master. By the 14th and 15th centuries the process of becoming a master had become more complicated and the artisans became permanent apprentices. Struggling to improve their rights despite the prohibitions against them, the apprentices formed their own brotherhoods and held strikes. Thus there were exploitation and elements of hired labour in the feudal guild.

In Italy there was no category of apprentice, only learners and not all of them managed to become guild members.

All in all, these guilds—both of the artisans and the merchants—resulted in the growth and flourishing of the towns. They brought about economic

improvement in the country and their political and administrative organization served to aid the townsfolk in their struggle with the feudal lords. Despite the strict regulation of production, the economic activity of the guilds was fairly efficient since in its early stages it led to high quality. Within the guild itself there was very little division of labour, which tended to operate rather between the guilds. Thus, according to Estienne Boyleau's *Book of Handicrafts*, by the mid-13th century there were no less than 100 guilds in Paris, a figure which by the 14th century had risen to 350. In Florence in the 13th and 14th centuries there were 21 guilds. The number of guilds does not in itself indicate the level of the division of labour. Sometimes this was higher where there were fewer guilds, as, for example, in Florence where the guilds were at a higher stage of development or in Lannes where the senior guilds controlled dozens of different trades. Usually the artisan who was not a member of the guild was not allowed to practise his trade or sell his wares. This guild coercion (*Zunftzwang*) was especially common in Germany where it also determined the number of apprentices and learners. In Italy it did not exist at all. In France membership of a guild was usually open for all who knew their trade and paid their entrance fee. Here, too, the guilds did not always require the production of a masterpiece or make limitations on the number of apprentices and learners.

From the 13th to the 15th century the guilds in many of the towns and cities fought against the ruling patriciate and in those towns like Augsburg and Cologne, where handicraft industry was relatively developed, they were victorious, but in towns like Lübeck and Hamburg, which were controlled by the merchants, they were beaten.

The guild organization in the feudal towns and cities was similar to that of the village commune, on which they were modeled. Despite its small-scale and primitive character medieval urban labour was a great step forward and a fruitful school for the development of the capitalist mode of production. At the same time the commodity character of guild production and the elements of hired labour and exploitation were still far from being capitalist. Subsequently, in succeeding centuries the guild world became an impediment to the development of capitalist relations, although in the 11th-15th centuries it, as a rule, tended to play a progressive role.

Alliances between towns. The fierce economic and political struggle between rival towns on local and external markets formed in this period, such as, for example, the fairs in the French province of Champagne, where merchants from all over Europe traded, was fairly common at the time. But also not unknown were alliances between towns. These were of a temporary nature and formed for military and political reasons, like, for example, the Lombardy League in the 12th century which was a military alliance of Italian cities against aggression from the German feudal lords. There were also politico-economic alliances, like the Hanseatic League, which comprised some 60 German towns and cities and not only conducted international trade but waged wars with foreign kingdoms, as happened in the 14th century.

Urban culture. The medieval towns and cities gave rise to a clear and distinctive culture, which being medieval contained within itself the earliest antifeudal trends which gradually increased towards the end of the period of mature feudalism.*

Although the ancient towns and cities had certain elements in common with those of feudal times, they were a completely distinctive historical phenomenon.

The urban handicraft industries, commodity production and the active involvement of the citizens in the social and political life of the towns required a minimal—and then ever increasing—literacy and a rational approach to a man and nature. In the early Middle Ages the Church had a monopoly of education and culture, but these it coloured in religious tones so as to serve its own interests and thereby that institution acted as an impediment to free thought. But being the only bearer of culture it could not prevent the natural, though extremely slow, progress of culture.

The emergence of towns and cities with their inhabitants struggling for communes against the feudal lords led to the gradual secularization of culture and to a sober rational type of thinking. Although the Church formally retained its monopoly, this was, in effect, being undermined by the new conditions and new laws of urban life which led to a new cultural upsurge.

* See the section on "The Renaissance".

Urban culture was largely rooted in the people and a certain contribution was made to it by the serfs who had fled to the towns and settled there. It was therefore naturally antifeudal and largely anticlerical. This watershed in West European culture on the whole relates to the 11th and early 12th centuries, although certain of its elements can be seen even earlier, particularly in Italy where the victory of the urban communes was linked with the emergence of national culture. The first document written in the Italian language comes from the 10th century even though the city chronicles of the 11th and 12th centuries were still being written in Latin. In the 13th century poetic works first appear in a mixture of north-French and local Italian dialects like Venetic and Milanese, or in Provençal mixed with Latinized Sicilian.

The classical manifestation of urban culture was the appearance at the turn into the 13th century of the *Book of Accounts* (Liber Abaci) and *Exercises in Geometry* by Leonardo Fibonacci of Pisa. These were practical aids for merchants and seafarers. Highly typical of urban culture of the period was the appearance in the 13th century of the *Livre du Tresor* by Brunetto Latini, who claimed that knowledge was as essential for life as money, and that not only mathematics but all other fields of knowledge were necessary for the active citizen. Marco Polo's *Million* claimed that knowledge was necessary even of other countries. Both these works were written in French, but in the same century the Franciscan Salimbene wrote his chronicle in a distinctive form of Latin that was similar to the living language of the people, while Dino Compagni of Florence wrote his Florentine chronicles in popular Italian, and Cecco Angiolieri of Siena wrote poetry in Italian praising the virtues of money and all that it brought.

Twelfth-century France saw the appearance of the *fabliau* genre (fables and short stories) written in popular French, and Germany—the genre known as *Schwank* in which the townsfolk bitterly criticized the feudal lords. More striking in its satire was the type of epic poem like the French *Le Roman de Renart* (History of Reynard the Fox) which was widely acclaimed in other countries and translated into German, Italian, English and Flemish. It is characteristic that Reynard himself, the wise and cunning citizen of the poem is opposed not only to kings, nobility, knights and priests, but also to the

ordinary townsfolk who would soon raise their voice too, which found reflection in the works of Rutebeuf.

In the 13th century another urban literary genre appeared—the allegorical poem, typified by the *Roman de la Rose* which contained elements of medieval free thought, frequently drawn from the ancient writers. As a counter to the religious and liturgical dramas of the Church there appeared the town games, which were close in character to the pagan village spring and autumn festivities and which developed into urban theatrical art. Elements of lay drama, however, also managed to break through in the Biblical subjects of the liturgical dramatic presentations. The French miracle plays and the German farces (*Fastnachtspiel*), which were written in the colloquial language of the people, were also played in the town squares.

Lay culture was further developed in the early 12th century by the appearance of secular schools in France (mainly in Paris), later in Italy and to a certain extent in Germany. Urban life required educated lawyers, doctors and technicians of various kinds. The lay schools were private and consequently independent of the Church and so the education they offered was relatively free in its ideological orientation. They gave rise to the vagantes or goliards—the wandering scholars, who wrote anticlerical, free-thinking poetry. Urban culture also had a certain influence on the literature of chivalry, strengthening its secular character and borrowing some of its themes.

An important cultural phenomenon in the 12th and 13th centuries was the appearance of the universities—communities of teachers and scholars (*universitas magistrorum et scholarium*). Urban life with its developing commerce and increased private ownership required large numbers of specialists in Roman law, as indeed did the monarchy. In the mid-12th century the University of Bologna was renowned throughout Europe for its facilities of civil and canonical law. The university itself consisted only of students, the professors being included in the collegium of doctors.

By the beginning of the 13th century there were universities at Palermo, Montpellier and Oxford, but the most typical was the University of Paris which in 1200 received a royal charter. It had four

faculties—one, the junior faculty, which offered courses in seven “free arts” and three senior faculties of theology, jurisprudence and medicine. The students were divided according to four “nations”—Gallic, Norman, Picardian and English. The Gallic “nation” also included Italians and Spaniards. All these “nations” elected the Rector, who was the head of the university.

By the 15th century there were more than 60 universities in Europe, more than twenty of which were in France, the rest being in England, Italy, Spain, Germany, Czechia and Poland.

The main method of teaching consisted in the scholastic mode of formal logical thinking and this was employed both in the lectures and in the debates, which were drawn either from the Holy Writ or from Aristotle. Scholasticism had a positive influ-

ence for its time, since it encouraged study of the ancient authors and ensured the preservation of a certain body of knowledge.

Lasting testimony to early medieval urban culture can be seen in the Gothic cathedrals which began to be built in the early 12th century and whose architecture revealed not only new tastes, but progress in the development of productive forces. The most outstanding examples of these were the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris and the Cathedrals of Reims and Sens in France, Ulm Cathedral in Germany, Canterbury Cathedral in England, Barcelona Cathedral in Spain and Florence Cathedral in Italy. These monuments of the past, which have lasted till our own times, are the most accessible masterpieces of medieval urban culture to our observation and study.

The Dramatic 14th Century

The 14th century saw great social upheavals in Western Europe. It was the time of the great peasant uprisings and the growth of antifeudal movements among the masses. These movements were clothed in religious garb and acquired heretic overtones. In 1260 an illiterate monk named Segarelli began to preach a new heresy based on the ideals of the early Christian apostolic Church. In 1300 he was burned at the stake in Parma as the head of a sect of Apostolic Brothers, but his ideas were continued and developed by Brother Dolcino, a runaway novice of a Franciscan monastery.

Peasant and urban uprisings in Italy. The Dolcino uprising. The Apostolic Brothers believed that it was their mission to breakdown the old order and establish a new one. The Pope of Rome was to be replaced and a new Pope chosen not by the Cardinals, but by God Himself (sending down good news to him); the ecclesiastical hierarchy was to be dissolved and the monastic orders abolished; all members of the new Christian community were to be equal and their property was to be held in common. These beliefs made the Apostolic Brothers representatives of one of the earliest radical peasant-plebeian sectarian currents.

In 1304 in Piedmont Brother Dolcino and his supporters gathered together a force of several thousand adherents. They were opposed by the united forces of the bishops, the lay feudals and the town communes amounting to two thousand men. Near the town of Vercelli a battle took place, from which the insurgents emerged victorious. But new reinforcements kept the insurgents pressed close to the foothills of the mountains, where they built a camp. In 1305 Pope Clement V called upon the feudal lords to help the Bishop of Vercelli promising those who took part in the holy crusade remission for their sins. Dolcino organized an army of one and a half thousand men, built temporary living quarters, made new fortifications and then, despite the cold and the hunger, conducted a successful maneuver to the Cebello Mountain. In autumn 1306 the Pope officially declared a crusade against the heretics. On May 1, 1306, the vanguard of the crusaders was beaten by the insurgents. There then followed a battle after which the feudal lords' troops were forced to retreat. Thereupon they began to lay siege to the insurgents' camp. In March 1307 after a three-day battle in which hundreds of the insurgents were killed, Dolcino, his mistress, Margarita, and their

closest followers were taken, tortured and then burned to death. But the Dolcino uprising resounded throughout Europe.

From 1382 to 1387 an uprising of the tuchini broke out in the Piedmont-Savoy region. The insurrection, however, was spontaneous and took on different forms at different times in the various parts of this region. It reached its height in 1386 when dozens of feudal castles were destroyed near Turin and many feudal lords put to death. In 1387 the tuchini stormed a castle near to Turin and almost the whole of Piedmont-Savoy was engulfed in a peasant war. But the insurgents were broken up into small groups and beaten by the joint forces of the Count of Savoy and the town militias. The difficult external situation sometimes forced the feudal lords to make concessions. Thus in 1387 Count Amadeus VII of Savoy revoked for the peasants of seven villages such feudal obligations as *forismaritagium*, *manus mortua*, and *la taille à merci*; reduced their *corvée* and declared them his subjects obliged only to pay poll-tax.

Southern Italy was also engulfed in peasant uprisings. In Calabria in 1459 Nicolo Tosto and his unsurgent army won a number of victories over the king's troops and laid siege to the residence of the governor of Cosenza. The insurgents demanded a repeal of the "hearth tax" and a return to the old system of a tax on crops. The insurrection was finally put down with artillery and the peasants forced to pay all the overdue payments, but fear of a new outbreak forced King Ferrante I to make concessions.

In early 1511 the peasants together with the poor people of the town of Udine seized the arsenal and stormed the palace of Della Torre. Then they went through the whole province wrecking the houses of the nobles and the rich townsmen. The peasant uprisings of the 15th and 16th centuries were less concerned with religious or utopian aims than with practical demands like reducing taxes and doing away with the worst of the feudal obligations.

The urban uprisings were also antifeudal. In 1347 Cola di Rienzi, the son of an innkeeper, who was an erudite public notary and an admirer of the ancient world, seized power in Rome, abolished the rights of the feudal barons and proclaimed a republic.

A number of urban uprisings took place in Bologna, Siena, Perugia and Florence in the 14th cen-

tury, where the first primitive forms of early capitalist manufactory, employing the cheap labour of many thousands of hired workers, had appeared. In 1345 in Florence a wool-carder named Ciuto Brandini led a movement of hired labourers demanding a 50 per cent pay increase and the organization of mutual help. Ciuto was seized and hanged and the movement crushed.

In Siena in 1371 the wool-carders repeated Brandini's demands for an increase in pay, seized the government palace and tried to run the new political organization they had formed. The outbreak was brutally crushed—in the workers' district of Oville not only were the insurgents butchered, but also their wives and children to teach others not to do so. But despite their victory, the rulers were forced to make certain concessions.

In 1378 the well-known uprising of the *ciompi* took place in Florence. They put forward a programme on behalf of the newly arising Italian pre-proletariat. They called for increased wages, an end to the monopoly power of their owners from the wealthy Lana guild, the organization of a people's militia and participation in running the city-state. They seized the magistrate's palace and drove the government from the signoria. But treachery on the part of Michele di Lando, the leader of the *nobili popolani*, together with a siege and the closure of the textile mills made them realize the need for organizing their own revolutionary government, whom they called the "Eight Saints of God's People" and which was headed by the carder, Bartolo di Jacopo Baroccio. But it was too late. The stratagems of the enemy resulted in rapid and savage reprisals. Outside the signoria under the pretence of the reception of the guild standards the *ciompi* were gathered together, surrounded by their enemies from the rich guilds and chopped down by the skillfully wielded axes of the butchers' guild. Then the members of the *ciompi* government, Domenico Tambo and Marco Gan were executed. This "first proletarian uprising", as it was described by Karl Marx, had considerable influence on the course of history in the Florentine Republic.

Peasant and urban uprisings in France and England. The 14th century was no less dramatic in France and England. In 1337 a war began between these two countries, which lasted 116 years and which was later known as the Hundred Years'

War. English soldiers ravaged the areas of France they seized and the difficult situation of the people was not made any easier by internecine strife between the French feudal lords themselves. After the Battle of Poitiers in 1356, where the French lost their army and the king himself, John II the Good, together with many nobles was captured, France's position became desperate. The treasury was empty and the defeat aroused considerable indignation. The urban representatives in the States-General got control of the States over the Royal Council, the army and the state apparatus. An uprising broke out in Paris led by the merchant Étienne Marcel. The Dauphin Charles was taken by the insurgent Parisians, but he later managed to flee from the capital. At the same time, in late May, 1358, a peasant uprising, the Jacquerie, broke out that was caused by an increase in the feudal rent in cash and the general devastation of the country after the war. The uprising engulfed almost all of Northern France and several towns came over to the side of the insurgents. Paris also helped the peasant insurgents, but despite attempts no alliance was reached between the peasants and the townsmen. The separate peasant contingents were welded together into an army by Guillaume Caillet. They destroyed castles, killed feudal lords and called for the destruction of the "nobles of the whole world". But, eventually, they were beaten, when the feudal lords deprived the peasant army of their leader by treacherously luring Guillaume Caillet into their camp. The uprising in Beauvais was put down but outbreaks still occurred till August in other areas. The peasant movement was doomed to failure, it was impossible for the peasants to get rid of the feudal order. Nevertheless, their attempts at revolt were not without result. The nobility were afraid to increase their demands indefinitely, which had to influence the further expansion of the peasants' individual freedom.

The defeat of the Jacquerie also affected the uprising in Paris. Étienne Marcel was killed and the Dauphin returned to reestablish the old order.

The difficult situation in France gave rise not only to outbreaks of revolt, but also led to an upsurge of patriotism, particularly after the raising of the English siege at Orleans in 1429 by Joan of Arc. This popular movement helped to unify France and strengthen its independence in the mid-15th century.

The Hundred Years' War also caused the English considerable trouble and resulted in the economic weakening of the country. The people suffered the burden of increased taxation. In 1381 the new capitation tax resulted in an outbreak of unrest in Essex and Kent and the rebellion of Wat Tyler. Tyler had fought in France and had shown himself to be a capable, eloquent, brave and wise man. He imposed a strict discipline on the insurgents and was merciless in his punishment of those found guilty of plunder. The insurgents believed that the king himself was good and that it was only necessary to get rid of his advisers who were abusing their power. They freed from prison the excommunicated priest, John Ball, who preached social equality, and repeated the famous words:

*When Adam delved and Eve span
Who was then a gentleman?*

The insurgents approached London, where the city's poor prevented the mayor from closing the gates. For the first time in history a people's army took the capital. They abolished the poll-tax and the exchequer books, they set free the prisoners and destroyed the city's prison and they put to death the judges and their clerks. Then they went to the Tower and demanded a meeting with King Richard.

The king was forced to agree and came to meet the insurgents at Mile End, then one of the suburbs. The insurgents took the Tower and put the king's counsellors including the Archbishop of Canterbury to death. The king met the insurgent army on June 14, and the latter demanded that the peasants be liberated from serfdom, that their feudal obligations be replaced by a small rent in cash and that they should have the right to trade freely. The king agreed to all their demands, but called upon them all to go home. Some of the insurgents refused and demanded a second meeting with the king. At this meeting Wat Tyler made another set of demands. He called for the confiscation of church lands and their redistribution to the peasants, for the lands that had been seized in the past by the lords to be returned and for all the privileges of the nobility to be repealed. These demands, which were known as the Smithfield Charter, were extremely radical in character, but they were never destined to be fulfilled. During the meeting with the king, which took

place in Smithfield—then outside the city's northern gates—Wat Tyler was treacherously killed by the Mayor of London. At the same time royal troops had been drawn up outside the city and together with the forces of some of the rich citizens took brutal reprisals against the insurgent peasants and the London poor. Although the revolt engulfed almost the whole of England, it was crushed by the king's troops. The reasons for this were not hard to find: the revolt was sporadic and uncoordinated and the insurgents themselves far too trusting. But it was not without its effects: the poll-tax was restricted, a new status was given to the workers and, most important of all, the liberation of the peasants from serfdom was accelerated. Some of the other peoples' revolts like the Jacquerie in France and the ciompi,

and that of del Bruno in Italy also had their results, for at least for a time the state was forced to relax some of the sore odious points of its legislation. Furthermore, the political structure became more democratized, and the ruling class was henceforth faced with the spectre of vengeance from the people, which helped to restrain its appetites, limit the amounts of feudal rent or early capitalist surplus-value and to some extent ease the forms of exploitation. Therefore, one cannot agree with those historians who look upon the dramatic 14th century as a senseless tragedy, which only taught the people to stop fighting for their own interests. Western Europe came out of the 14th century with a somewhat weakened but still strong feudal regime.

The Renaissance

The Italian Renaissance. The upheavals that engulfed Western Europe weakened and changed the classical feudal system. In those countries where urban life with its commodity-money relations and urban culture with its antifeudal trends had long played an important role, the elements of early capitalist relations began to develop.

The prime example of such a country was Italy, but she was closely followed by England, France, eastern Spain and some of the Germanic lands. Instead of the feudal guild workshop with its learners and apprentices and its patriarchal traditions early capitalist production with extensive—for the time—use of hired labour and work based on the division of labour began to appear. Italy in the 14th century and rural England in the 15th, where cloth and silk manufacture were widely developed, were the first countries in which this took place. This new system was far more productive and efficient than the old feudal guild system. The cheap workforce made it possible to far outdistance guild production, and the division of labour meant better quality and a larger scale of production. In Florence, for example, in the 14th century there were between two and three hundred cloth manufactories producing from 70,000 to 100,000 bales of cloth a year, the total cost of which amounted to 1,200,000 gold florins. Florence, Siena and other Italian towns made cloth for

almost the whole of Western Europe and a large part of the Middle East. The international trade which the Italian cities had conducted since the time of the crusades brought cultural as well as economic ties. And the varied cultures of the Levant and Byzantium began to influence Italian culture, whose roots were in antiquity.

The early capitalist manufactories which brought about a considerable expansion of commodity circulation strengthened these contacts between countries. And these, in turn, required a deeper and more careful study of man and nature. Seafaring, for example, required a knowledge of the sea currents, the winds, the heavens and the coastline. Trade required not only accounting, management and arithmetic, but also human psychology and a knowledge of the customs and character of various peoples. And those who first came to realize that this knowledge was necessary were the young, energetic Italian bourgeoisie, who were in the process of gradually breaking down the feudal system. The ideology of the Renaissance naturally became the ideology of the early bourgeoisie, although during the period of transition (while feudal relations were still in existence) various other currents—stemming from the nobility on the one hand and the popular masses on the other—continued to make themselves felt.

Western Europe

The Renaissance in Italy was most evident in the field of culture and literature, but these were strongly connected, of course, to all the other aspects of the country's historical development—the social, the political and the economic. The whole diverse period of history from the 14th to the 16th century can be considered as the Renaissance. The Italian Renaissance had enormous influence on the development of culture in the other countries of Western Europe, particularly where the conditions of the early bourgeoisie were similar to those in Italy, as was the case, for example, in France.

The great philosophers and thinkers of the Renaissance made man the centre of the Universe. Their ideal was the fully developed personality that combined together the highest qualities of both body and soul. Despite religious ideology they vindicated the human desire for happiness and glorified the dignity of man. It was not, they claimed, class privilege which determined a man's importance, but his qualities as a person. Even history, they said, was not shaped according to God's will, but by people. The humanists became the creators of a new antifeudal ethic.

This type of thinking marked the transitional period to the Renaissance and its best example can be seen in the world of Dante Alighieri. He wrote a cycle of poems entitled *La Vita Nuova* in which the medieval allegories were supplanted by deep human feelings. His best known work *The Comedia*, which was dubbed "divine" for its high moral qualities recreated with sculptural precision a realistic picture of the early medieval world and the people who lived in it, despite all its feudal subject-matter and the abundance of allegory and symbol in the verses. At the same time Dante's works were the first great crucible that produced the literary Italian language.

In the field of art it was Giotto di Bondone who played a significant role in this early medieval period giving his figures character and a life of their own.

The founding father of humanism during the Renaissance period was the poet Francesco Petrarch, who tried to combine Christianity with ancient ideas and thereby included it in the new Renaissance system of values. His *Sonnets* written in Italian reveal a subtle knowledge of the human soul. His appeal to antiquity was not just ideological, it had

a specific purpose, for he saw the former grandeur of Rome as an instrument for uniting Italy in the period of the Renaissance and in this respect he inspired the antifeudal movement that was headed by Cola di Rienzi in the mid-14th century.

Like all the prominent figures of the Renaissance, Petrarch thirsted for life-long and eternal glory. He was crowned with a laurel wreath as a great poet and historian on the Capitoline Hill in Rome, thereby affirming the renaissance of the ancient cult of poetry. But Petrarch as well as being a poet and a scholar was also a politician. For several years he conducted peace talks between Genoa and Milan, and was ambassador to the emperor and later to the king of France.

Petrarch's early humanism contained contradictions and fluctuations between medieval ideology and paganism, as can be seen in his treatise entitled *Secretum meum* which was written in the form of a dialogue between Francesco and Augustine. Here man's appeal to God, it was claimed, could not bring complete consolation, and the search for happiness on earth was stated to be a characteristic of human nature. Petrarch in his works dealt with one of the crucial problems of humanism—man's cognition of himself.

The realistic tradition of early humanism was continued by Giovanni Boccaccio, who considered himself a disciple of Petrarch. He wrote the first psychological novel in European literature, *Elegia di Madonna Fiametta*, and a brilliant series of real-life novellas, *The Decameron*, which reflected all sides of life in the Italy of his day. He held the old feudal world up to merciless ridicule, particularly the hypocrisy and parasitism of the clergy and opposed to it the world of Renaissance man with its characteristic freedom of feelings, boldness of thought and sharp of wit.

At the beginning of the Renaissance the Italian masters intuitively turned to their ancient predecessors, finding consonance there with their own feelings of the world. The scholars and artists of the mature Renaissance used the works of the ancient writers and consciously adapted them to the requirements of their own times. In the 15th century the mathematician, Luca Pacioli, and the artist, Piero della Francesca, turned to the ancients for the secrets of the proportions of the human body. Pacioli studied the sonnets of Vitruvius and introduced

them into his works, pointing out that it was not only necessary to study the ancient writings, but more important to possess the kind of talent that could supplement the insufficient and remove the superfluous, i.e. creatively assimilate the ancient heritage. Leon Battista Alberti, who was both writer and architect, musician and painter, wrote in a treatise entitled *On Architecture* that the ancients tried to imitate nature, which was the finest artist of all forms and to study its laws, and it was therefore necessary to learn from the ancient masters. The sculptor, Donatello, learned from the examples of later Roman sculpture and used his knowledge to create expressive portraits of his contemporaries.

The 15th century philosopher, Pico della Mirandola, summed up the philosophy of the mature Renaissance when he said that the greatest and most entrancing happiness of man was to possess the knowledge he desired and be what he wanted.

The leading men of the Renaissance not only took up this call, they almost all lived in the very thick of the problems of their time. They took active part in practical struggle, fighting for the various parties with the pen, with the sword and sometimes with both. These men included Michelangelo Buonarroti, Leonardo da Vinci and Niccolo Machiavelli in Italy and Albrecht Dürer and Martin Luther in Germany. At a time of wars and reformations when the economic and political harmony so desired by the people of the period was broken, these titanic figures of the Renaissance lived and worked defending the ideal of Man as the centre of the Universe.

Alberti was the ideal of the all-round man in the period of the mature Renaissance and Leonardo da Vinci in the later Renaissance. He became, in the words of a great contemporary historian, Eugenio Garin, the first "man of the new type, an original and amazing thinker". Leonardo da Vinci's work reveals not only an inclination towards experimentation, but also an experimental method, albeit less perfected than that of Galileo. Painting for da Vinci was a greater art form than literature, since it could be understood by the literate and the illiterate alike. It was poetry that could be seen. But painting, he believed, was not only higher than literature, it was higher than science, for it was the root of science and its expression. It could express phenomena with the greatest reality showing their interrelationship

with their various components and movements. Furthermore, painting could depict beauty in a form that was more lasting than nature and it could create something new that nature was not yet capable of. Therefore he spoke about the "science of painting". This was not a fantastical extolling of painting, but a demand for depth and comprehensiveness in art, qualities which were realized in Leonardo da Vinci's own work and in the work of such great masters as Michelangelo and Rafael.

But the great men of the Renaissance were, nevertheless, limited by the times in which they lived. Leonardo da Vinci, for example, for all his vast knowledge of human anatomy knew nothing of blood circulation, not to mention of the theory of evolution. He tried to cover all the sciences, but such a formidable task had to await other great men like Galileo, Bacon, Giordano Bruno and Giambattista Vico. Nevertheless, his contribution to the fundamentals of certain sciences was enormous.

The Renaissance in France. Just as in Italy the emergence and flourishing of the Renaissance in France was due to the same economic basis that encouraged the development of humanitarian thinking and a new world outlook. In the 15th and 16th centuries France entered the path of bourgeois development.

By the 14th century the preconditions for Renaissance culture already existed in that country. The development of commodity production and the growth of the textile and other industries increased the need for the study and application of Roman law, as had been the case in Italy, particularly in the University of Bologna. The rise of culture was attested to by the appearance of new universities in Bordeaux, Grenoble, Cannes, Poitiers, Aix and Orleans. The *Memoires* of Philippe de Comines were the first swallow of humanitarian historiography. Printing shops, which appeared in France in the 1470s, were of great importance for the development of culture. The 15th century saw the beginning in literature of realistic poetry, prosaic novellas, lay mystery plays, farces, comedies and plays for edification. At the end of the century, in art the regional medieval schools began to be replaced by a national school of French painting.

The ruinous Italian wars of the late 15th century and the early 16th century were of cultural as well as politico-strategical significance, for the French

became visibly aware of the Italian Renaissance. Though this was not a decisive factor, it nevertheless played an important part in encouraging the development of French humanist culture which began, like the Italian, as early bourgeois culture. The relatively weak development of the French bourgeoisie in the first half of the 16th century and the democratic elements of the Huguenot Reformation had an important influence on early French humanism for the inclination to make use of the ancient heritage did not prevent early humanism from containing the essential elements of national character and rational self-awareness.

Like the Italian and German humanists, Guillaume Bude studied the ancient classical writers and began in 1530 the formation of a university of humanitarian sciences, which subsequently became known as the Collège de France.

François Rabelais, one of the founders of the French literary language and national French literature, was one of the greatest humanists in France and the whole of Europe. The antifeudal character of his works contained not only critical but constructive elements. He extolled the strength, patriotism and rational outlook of the French people and stood for the harmonious and liberal education of the individual. His *Pantagruel* and *Gargantua* gave a satirical picture of feudal France, which was compared with the Abbey of Theleme, an ideal state ruled by a wise philosopher king, who cared for all sections of the population like what we will later see in the *City of the Sun* by Tommaso Campanella.

Bonaventure des Periers wrote a biting poetic satire of Christianity entitled *Cymbalum Mundi*, and Étienne Dolet produced a number of anticlerical writings. But these and many other humanists were persecuted for their beliefs. They sought the patronage of Margaret of Navarre, the sister of King Francis I, who had a liking for literature, but des Periers was forced to commit suicide and Dolet was burned at the stake.

A bright flower in the French Renaissance was a literary group headed by the poet Pierre de Ron-

sard, which called itself the Pléiade. These were the firm defenders and creators of the national French literary language. The literary manifesto of this group, which was written by Joachim du Bellay, proposed a reform which would do away with the court Latin poetry and bring about the full development of the national language.

Together with ruinous civil and religious wars the second half of the 16th century brought a certain aristocratization of humanism. Michel Montaigne in his work *Essais* set out not only humanitarian theories of education but also developed the theme of the need to strengthen absolutism. Jean Bodin, who made a study of history, economics and law, also became a theoretician of absolutism as a force to unite the nation.

In the 16th century a new theory of architecture was formulated which combined ancient classical elements with national features.

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The Renaissance in Italy, France and other West European countries was formed and developed in the feudal era as a natural offshoot of highly developed economy which produced throughout Europe the beginnings of capitalism within an essentially feudal system. The culture of the Renaissance could not have come to fruition, had it not been fed by the diverse and developing medieval urban culture, although the Renaissance was not the simple continuation of this culture, but a qualitatively new stage that was to lead to the formation of early bourgeois culture.

The Renaissance, which grew from the practical necessities of real life and the need to study man and nature, was a progressive turning point and history's first hymn extolling the ideals of free thought and the harmonious development of the individual.

The Renaissance revealed man and nature. And it was during this period that new lands and new peoples were discovered, a development that was to have a profound effect on the subsequent history of West European feudalism.

The first discoveries. The feudal era brought with it the discovery of the New World as well as new ideas about the nature of the world and the possibilities it afforded to man. The era of great geographical discoveries marked the threshold of a new historical period, but a period that in terms of social structure and the mode of production still remained as of old. At the same time the geographical discoveries encouraged the development of the most extensive international trade the world had yet known, intercontinental seafaring and new forms of industry and thereby considerably accelerated the development of the revolutionary element in the declining feudal society.

Seafaring explorations also took place in the early medieval period, but they did not lead to discoveries. In the 11th century, for example, the Vikings reached Greenland, and possibly Labrador and Massachussets, but they did not result in the opening up of any new lands or new sea routes and therefore cannot be considered discoveries. In this early period there was no economic, political or cultural need for such discoveries. Although Western Europe was acquainted with the countries of the Far East like India, Indonesia and China and they were described in the early medieval period by such explorers as Marco Polo, they cannot be considered discoveries in the broad sense of the word. It was only in the 15th and 16th centuries that there occurred a real need to discover new routes and new lands and the possibility of their development. It is not accidental that many of the European countries like Spain, Portugal, France, England and Italy took part in these discoveries.

The first and most important of these geographical discoveries were made not by the most developed countries—England, the Netherlands and Italy—but by Spain and Portugal, which were less developed. Here after the reconquest had been completed a huge mass of the nobility was formed looking for opportunities to apply its strength. And it was these that formed the army of conquistadors in the New World. The trade conducted by Portugal and Spain and their new light and maneuverable boats helped to bring about the success of

many of the first expeditions and to lead to discoveries.

On the eve of the great geographical discoveries a breakdown occurred in contacts between Europe and East and South Asia. The Mongol Empire fell to Tamerlane, the Turks took Constantinople and the route to Asia through Tana-Trebizond was cut off, and the southern passage to India through Egypt and the Red Sea was in the hands of the Arabs. In the 15th century there was an acute shortage in Europe of the gold that was necessary for trading with the East, and European production fell far short of requirements. Hence the thirst for gold which engulfed the Europeans and the hunt for gold wherever it might (or in many cases might not) be. The Portuguese looked for it on the coasts of Africa, and the Spaniards were driven later across the Atlantic Ocean to the Americas in search of the yellow metal.

It was entirely due to this search for gold that the route to India was opened. In the 15th century the Italian, Niccolo di Conti visited India to be followed by the Russian merchant, Afanasy Nikitin. In 1486 the Portuguese, Bartholomeu Dias reached the southern cape of Africa convinced that he had sailed round the continent. Ten years later Vasco da Gama, following Dias' route, reached India and returned to Portugal with a valuable cargo of spices. After this the king of Portugal, Manoel, declared himself the "Sovereign of India".

The Portuguese also, with the help of Italian sailors, ventured out on to the open sea to land on the Canaries and Madeira in the 1420s, on the Azores in the 1430s and on the Cape Verde Islands in 1450s. From there the bold seafarers and shipowners made with the help of the kings of Portugal a number of unsuccessful attempts to find new islands and countries lying to the west of the European continent. Similar expeditions were sent out towards the end of the same century by the English, who used Italian seafarers, one of whom, Giovanni Cabotto—better known in English by name John Cabot—reached North America and Labrador in 1497, five years after Christopher Columbus.

The discovery of America on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean was the greatest historical event of

its time. And although Columbus was not the only bold and daring seafarer to offer his services to the kings of Spain and Portugal in an attempt to discover new routes and new lands, his role in history is indisputed.

Christopher Columbus. Christopher Columbus was born in the autumn of 1451 in Olivella, a suburb of Genoa, the eldest son of Domenico Colombo, a clothweaver, and Susanna Fontanarossa. Both his father and mother lived to see their son's discovery of America, which he made in 1492 when he was 41 years old. Columbus' grandfather, Giovanni Colombo, a peasant from Maconese, a village in the Valley of Fontanabuona near Mt. Chiavari, came to live near Genoa, where he sent his 11-year-old Domenico—the future father of Columbus—to train as a clothweaver. Domenico Colombo was a full citizen of Genoa and a strong supporter of the Campofregóso line. At 29 he was appointed by Giano Campofregóso, the Doge of Genoa, to be guardian of one of the city towers and the gates of Olivella. Sometime later the same office was given by Doge Ludovico Campofregóso to Columbus' uncle, Antonio, who also became guardian of the Capo Faro tower, which was the famous lighthouse of Genoa. Three years later Doge Pietro Campofregóso made Domenico Colombo again the guardian of the Olivella tower. But this service was not a permanent source of material wealth, for it was subsequently given to others. Columbus' father tried to improve his financial situation by opening a cheese shop and later a tavern in Savona. But he was not a very successful businessman and on one occasion was imprisoned for debt. His 19-year-old son, Christopher, started to help him and he was able to pay back the money he owed for the wool which he needed, since his father along with his other activities had never ceased to be a weaver. In Savona, where he moved temporarily there was a whole colony of weavers from his former village. Christopher began to run his father's affairs, buying wine for the tavern. Domenico Colombo sold the small house and grounds which he had from the Monastery of St. Stefano in Genoa to buy a share in the St. Giorgio Bank of Genoa. Finally, at 21 Christopher Columbus became a weaver like his father and was thereby able to make his contribution to the budget of the family, which besides himself and his parents included his three brothers, Gio-

vanni Pellegrino, Bartholomeo and Giacomo (later in Spain to be known as Diego) and his sister Biancchetta.

As a young man Christopher began to go sailing along the Ligurian and Provence coasts and to Corsica, Sardinia, Sicily and even the Bay of Carthage on the North African coast. In 1476 the ship on which he was sailing was sunk by corsairs near Gibraltar, but Columbus saved himself by swimming to Lagos in Portugal. In 1497, at the age of 28, he went to Lisbon and Madeira as an agent empowered to act on behalf of the Genoan trading house of Dinegro in the purchase of sugar. In 1483 Columbus' father returned to Genoa from Savona and settled in a house near the Gates of St. Andrea on the diritto di Ponticello where he had lived in 1455 when Christopher was four years old. The house which had a weaver's shop on the ground floor became famous as "Columbus' House" and its marble columns and arches can still be seen today. In 1477 Christopher Columbus went to England and two years later took up residence on the Island of Portosanto near Madeira, where he married the daughter of Perestrello, a sailor of Italian origins. Perestrello collected naval charts and writings about seafaring expeditions. In 1483 Columbus started talks with the Portuguese rulers offering to finance an expedition to the West in search of the new lands that were spoken about in fantastic tales, lands that had been given such names as Antillia and Sipagno. Offers to undertake expeditions of this kind were as many as there were bold sailors willing to go on them, but so far they had brought little result and the Portuguese turned him down as being just another adventurer. Then Columbus appealed to Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, but they, too, were unwilling to confirm the agreements, which would have given Columbus considerable wealth, privilege and rank. Eventually, however, he succeeded in prevailing upon them.

The discovery of America. On August 3, 1492, three small sailing ships—the *Santa Maria*, the *Pinta* and the *Niña* set sail from the Spanish port of Palos. These small single-deck boats had a crew of no more than 90 men. Some two and a half months later Rodrigo Triana, one of the sailors on watch on the *Pinta*, caught sight of land. The New World had been discovered. It was an event of world-historical importance which not only changed European

ideas of geography but ushered in a new stage in the development of society.

The first land of the America discovered by Columbus was the small island of Guanahani in the Bahamas, to which he gave the name of St. Salvador (Saviour). He then went on to discover other islands in the Bahama group and in late October reached the northern coast of Cuba. In early December he discovered Haiti, which he called Hispaniola (Little Spain). On his second expedition between 1493 and 1496, which consisted of 17 ships and 1,500 soldiers and crew, Columbus investigated the south coast of Cuba and discovered Jamaica, Puerto Rico and the Lesser Antilles. On his third expedition (1498-1500) he landed on Hispaniola where a fierce conflict resulted in Columbus' removal as vice-regent of these lands and he was brought to Spain in chains. After being released he made a fourth expedition in 1502 and discovered the shores of Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Honduras. On May 20, 1506, the eventful life of that bold and persistent seafarer, discoverer, politician and merciless colonizer came to an end.

The Pacific Ocean. Columbus believed that all the lands he had discovered were just the eastern part of the Old World. Although he came near to discovering a route to the Pacific, this was only done in 1513 by Vasco de Balboa, who crossed the Panama Isthmus and discovered the vast expanses of the ocean. Before this event, however, in 1507 Martin Waldseemüller, a geographer and mathematician, who believed that the newly discovered lands were a quarter of the Earth, proposed that they should be called America in honour of the Florentine astronomer and explorer, Amerigo Vespucci, who between 1501 and 1504 had sailed along the coasts of South America discovering Florida (and possibly Brazil before Cabral) and describing the lands. This part of the continent then received the name America. North America was discovered in Columbus' lifetime by John Cabot (an Italian from Genoa, Giovanni Cabotto, who had settled in England) who in 1497-1498 discovered the shores of Newfoundland and a considerable part of the coast of North America. And some years later Corte Real (a Portuguese) discovered Labrador.

Final confirmation of the fact that by going west they could get to Asia came from the expedition headed by the Portuguese, Fernando Magellan,

which lasted from 1519 to 1522. The expedition passed through the straits that lie between the continent of South America and Tierra del Fuego (now called the Strait of Magellan), and entered the Pacific Ocean. They landed on the Philippines, where Magellan was killed in a clash with the natives, and only one of the three ships under Sebastian del Cano succeeded in going round Africa and reaching Spain. Of the 265 men that originally set out only 18 returned from the first round-the-world journey that proved in practice that Earth was indeed round.

The beginning of colonialism. All these geographical discoveries were in fact expeditions of conquest which resulted in the seizure of whole countries and the oppression or extermination of whole peoples. Columbus was the first of these colonialists. After his first expedition he came to King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain with a proposal for the systematic plunder of the newly discovered lands. He promised to provide as much gold, cotton, spices and slaves as were required. Columbus also determined the methods of dealing with the conquered peoples. His instructions to Mozen Pedro Margarit included the recommendation that the Indians should not be treated cruelly but if one of them was caught stealing, he should have his nose and ears cut off, since these were the parts of the body it was impossible to conceal. And this advice was more than zealously acted upon by the Spanish hidalgos. In the drive for gold, which frequently did not exist in the newly discovered lands, they brutally exterminated thousands of the native population, particularly since they considered them to be pagans and cannibals. The conquistadors conducted continuous persecution against the indigenous population. Thus, for example, when Hispaniola was discovered it had a population of over one million. 16 years later, in 1508, this had been reduced to 70,000. In 1514 there were only 13,000 and by 1517 only 1,112 of the original population were left alive.

The Portuguese were no less brutal in India, Malacca and Indonesia. They established themselves in forts and here through the local potentates forced the population into paying various dues and tributes. They controlled all the trade throughout their colonial empire which brought in immense profit. After the first expedition of Vasco da Gama, which reached the Malabar harbour of Calicut, the town

was fired on by Pedro Cabral's ships. On his second expedition to India, Vasco da Gama arriving in Calicut hanged the local fishermen on yards and then sent their arms, legs and heads to terrify those defending the town. The Portuguese took others' ships and burned them together with their crews. Albuquerque, the vice-roy of India, was renowned for his cruelty. For a period of two years his fleets plundered the coastal towns, brutally annihilating the inhabitants. But the extermination of the local population in America, who were called Indians because the discovered lands were wrongly named India, soon led to catastrophic consequences for the colonialists themselves. In 1501 they were forced to bring over the first shipment of black slaves from Africa to Cuba and Hispaniola. Henceforth the slave-trade became one of the most profitable forms of trade. Western Africa became one massive hunting ground for slaves and lost more than two million of its population, approximately one million of whom died either during the hunt or on their way to America.

The conquest of the Incas and the Aztecs. The subsequent opening up of lands in the Americas was due to the direct seizure of the new territories and the systematic plunder of the population through new colonial methods of exploitation. The best example of this was the Spanish conquest of the Aztecs in Mexico and the Incas in Peru.

The conquistadors were brought there by the unquenchable thirst for gold, by stories about fabled "golden empires", though in fact there was little gold at all in the lands they conquered and plundered. In 1519 one of these gold-seekers, Hernando Cortes, set out from Cuba to Mexico with 500 men, 16 horses and a few cannons without informing the governor of the island. With the aid of local tribes that were hostile to the Aztecs Cortes took their capital, Tenochtitlán, and made a prisoner of their king, Montezuma. But the Indians revolted and the conquerors were forced to flee. In 1521 Cortes once again took the capital where he practised unheard-of butchery. He then went on to conquer the whole of Mexico, Honduras and Guatemala, which became the dominions of the Spanish hidalgos. Here at last they found the long-desired gold, and silver as well as fertile lands. The conquests of that cruel but brave adventurer were virtually legalized by the Spanish crown. The peoples of the conquered state

were declared to be its free vassals, and supposedly enjoy the patronage of the conquerors. A system known as *encomienda* was instituted which was little more than feudal European serfdom in a form that was harsher and more akin to slavery.

Another conquistador, Francisco Pizarro, with a small force of under 200 began an expedition in the 1530s to the Pacific coast of South America, where he conquered the Incas. Subsequently these conquests were enlarged to include Colombia and Chile and the Amazon basin.

Under the fire of the Spanish cannons the ancient civilizations perished, their populations to a large extent being wiped out. Those that were left were subjected to merciless exploitation in the fields and mines under the *encomienda* system. Particularly notorious for their terrible conditions were the silver mines at Potosi (opened in 1545), where the Indians were forced to serve *mita* (mining conscription). The colonial "patronage" soon made itself felt. In the first thirty years of feudal-colonial slavery almost half the population of Peru were wiped out. The brutal exploitation which resulted in the genocide of millions was encouraged and blessed by the Catholic Church, which had become the ideological apparatus of the rulers of the New World.

Other countries as well as Spain made colonial conquests in the Americas. England began colonial conquests in the mid-16th century and Holland and France in the early 17th. The English took the Virginian lands, Guiana, Jamaica, the Bermudas and some of the Antilles. The Dutch took part of Guiana and some of the Lesser Antilles. The French also took part of Guiana and part of Canada. The European civilization brought to America slavery-based plantation economy.

Portugal's subsequent weakness was exploited by the Dutch, who took the sea routes and lands in the Indian Ocean and set up the great colonial East India Company. In their progress eastwards they took Australia and New Zealand.

Socio-economic upheavals. The great geographical discoveries brought Western Europe enormous social and economic changes. Its economy, politics and to a certain extent its culture acquired world dimensions.

The centre of trade moved first to Portugal, then Spain and finally to Holland and England. All kinds of goods began to flood in. And European

industrial goods went to America, Asia and Africa. From the western and eastern colonies there came a flood of spices, cotton, sugar and tobacco. Antwerp, Amsterdam and London became centres of the world's international trade and their stock exchanges began making major financial deals.

The colonial system, whose foundations had been laid in the 16th century during the course of the geographical discoveries and which has lasted until the present day, was the source of colossal capital accumulation which gave a sharp stimulus to the development of capitalist production during the period of what is known as primary accumulation.

As has been mentioned, it was the thirst for gold primarily that drove the Europeans to make the great geographical discoveries. And this arose from economic need. Henceforth gold began to come to Western Europe, moreover, the yellow metal flooded it. In 1493 there were an estimated 550,000 kg of gold in Western Europe. In 1544 there were 815,000 kg and by 1600 there were 1,192,000 kg of gold in Europe. Silver, too, began to come in in ever increasing amounts. The figures for silver in the same years rose from 7 million kg to 9 million kg and finally to 24 million kg. It might have been expected that this enrichment of Europe might have led to the general well-being of its people, but in reality this abundance of precious metal brought an unprecedented rise in prices and a fall in the purchasing power of money. The first price increases were noted in Spain, where, like Portugal, infla-

tion rose to 600 per cent, in France, to 500 per cent, in Holland and England, from 300 to 400 per cent, in Italy and Germany—250 to 300 per cent and in Scandinavia, from 100 to 150 per cent. This "price revolution" was due to the cheapening of precious metals not only through their increased quantity but mainly through their cheap mining in the Spanish colonies where Indian and Negro slave labour made them virtually costless. Gold and silver as a commodity were obtained at a minimal cost and sold at a high price. This resulted in a worsening of the material situation of the hired labourers, who received pay, for their real incomes dropped considerably. This, of course, was highly advantageous to the manufacturers. The relative weight of surplus value increased and the whole of capitalist production was able to expand. Those who lost from the "price revolution" were the poor peasants whose wages were paid in money and the nobles who received fixed rents, for the real value of the money they received was considerably less than the nominal value. On the other hand, the position of the new bourgeoisified nobility was much strengthened.

On the whole the "price revolution" resulted in increasing class differentiation in feudal society and the accelerated transition to early capitalist society. And the roots of all these developments lay in the great geographical discoveries.

One of the most important phenomena of the transition period in economics and politics was absolutism.

Absolutism

Under absolutism, which was a completely new type of feudal government, the countries of Western Europe stepped up their policy of conquest and exploitation of the colonies and enforced a harsh system of exploitation over their own hired workers. Profits from the colonies and the increase in surplus value promoted the growth of capitalist relations, and the policy of absolutist states was conducive to this.

Despite the fact that the forms of absolutism varied from country to country—the four main types being the French, the English, the Spanish and the

Italian—they nevertheless had certain essential characteristics in common. The first of these was the development of the manufactory-based industry which distinguished the period of early capitalism in Western Europe.

The manufactory-based industry. The manufactory-based industry during the absolutist period had been preceded by early manufactory which first made its appearance in Italy during the 14th and 15th centuries. It had not, however, been totally unique to that country. In the trading towns of Flanders, Spain and southern France there had

been various attempts to turn the old artisan workshops into larger mills. In England, for example, in the 14th century the production of cloth in a textile centre like York had virtually passed into the hands of the buyers-up and the cloth-weavers themselves had been forced into the position of hired labourers. And later in the 15th century England saw the development of the cottage industry working for export.

In the mid-15th century Netherlands the ordinary artisans were already beginning to go bankrupt, while the masters were becoming textile entrepreneurs. These were the first steps towards early capitalism, when its primitive forms co-existed with the handicraft guilds. Even medieval Germany, for all the complexity and individuality of its various states, knew the elements of early capitalism. In towns like Augsburg during the 15th century types of enterprise sprung up that were similar in form to the cottage industries of England using the labour of dependent artisans on a capitalist-type exploitation basis. And again in the mining industry of Saxony, manufactory of a semi-capitalist type exploiting hired labour was already beginning in the 15th century.

At this early stage of capitalism the subordination of labour to capital was highly primitive, producing only absolute surplus-value which at the next stage would become relative surplus-value. It was the stage at which absolutism developed in Western Europe.

Despite the maintenance of the guild system in France in the 16th and 17th centuries, the manufactory-based industry there began to get noticeably stronger, particularly in such branches as shipbuilding, metallurgy, armoury, printing and textiles as well as in the countryside. And this was due to the stimulus provided by the ever expanding foreign trade. Cloth, linen, paper and books went to Spain and Scandinavia; velvet, silk, brocade, and carpets went to Germany; trade with the Levant through Marseilles increased making that town rival Venice. Other French towns like Dieppe, Nantes, Bordeaux, La Rochelle and the ports, particularly Le Havre began to increase their trade. The general development of the French economy was aided by the Bank of Lyons which became an international centre of finance. The owners of big capital took over production, setting up manufacturing workshops like the

textile mills in Poitou and the flax and linen mills in Maine and Brittany. Many parts of the country began to produce goods of a single type and this specialization led to the need for internal commodity exchange. The number of these workshops began to increase particularly in those towns where there were no guilds, which hampered the development of these early capitalist forms of industry in corporative towns. Concerned to increase their revenues, the French absolutist rulers helped the capitalist workshops by preventing the import of ready-made goods through the imposition of prohibitive tariffs. The hereditary title of master was put up for sale so as to deprive the guilds of their former monopoly. Attempts were also made to unify weights, measures, currency and road tolls.

The manufacturing workshops developed at an even greater rate in absolutist England although in terms of size, population and the number of towns the country was much smaller than France. Particularly developed here were the textile and mining industries. In the mid-14th century England exported some 5,000 bales of cloth. By the early 16th century these exports had risen to 80,000 and by the mid-16th century to more than 120,000. In the main, textile manufacture began in the English villages, where the rural handicraftsmen became virtually hired labourers, while the rich buyer-ups became entrepreneurs. In the east and south-west counties of England—Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Somerset and other counties the workshops produced cloth; in Norfolk, Kent, Essex and Suffolk they produced worsted and rough fabrics; and in Lancashire and Yorkshire in the 16th century they produced rough cloths. Frequently round towns there were hamlets and villages working according to the cottage industry system. Their spread was furthered by the increasing amount of sheep-farming and the concomitant dispossession of the peasants who formed a reserve of cheap labour. As well as cloth weaving 16th century England saw the spread of workshops producing linen, silk, leather, lace, stockings, hardware, paper, gunpowder, sugar, and in the 17th century cotton fabrics. On the Thames and the Tyne ship-building developed. The mining and metallurgical industries began to pass into the hands of the capitalist entrepreneurs. Political immigration also played a role in the growth of manufacture in England as the Flem-

ish weavers, the French silk weavers and the German ore miners and steelmakers all contributed their knowledge to English production.

The development of manufacture in Spain was unique and rapid. Only in the 15th century had Spain become united, but after the opening up of the lands in the New World she became a world power, the "empire on which the sun never set". The flood of gold from the Americas at first resulted in enrichment. In the early 16th century elements of early capitalist relations began to be discernible, particularly in the cloth-weaving industry. In Cordoba and Toledo (Castile), Saragosa (Aragon) and Barcelona (Catalonia) manufacturing workshops sprung up employing hundreds of workers, while in the surrounding areas there were artisan enterprises dependent on them. Traditional Spanish silk-weaving expanded together with the manufacture of soap, earthenware, metal, metallic money and ships. Foreign trade, which normally encouraged the development of manufacture, played a particularly important role in Spain, since her American colonies represented an enormous market, especially for weapons, clothes and food. But economically speaking, Spain was behind France, England and the politically subordinate Netherlands and her early manufacture could not cope with the enormous requirements of foreign trade. The more developed countries, particularly the Netherlands, the model country for the early manufacturing industry and seafaring that was soon to rise up against its master, Spain, the colossus with feet of clay, took upon themselves an active role as producer and exporter. The goods produced in the more developed countries—the Netherlands, England and France—were cheaper and the "price revolution" here was less acute than in Spain which was one of the reasons for its collapse. The early capitalist manufacture that had begun to develop in Spain was undermined by the trade, excise and taxation policies of a state that defended the interests of its nobility and conducted a policy of robbery. Already in the second half of the 16th century there began an economic decline. The national debt stood at nearly 40 million ducats in the 1670s and by the end of the century it rose to 100 million ducats. The discovery of America at first built Spain up and then soon afterwards destroyed it. Or to be more precise, since Spain had entered the period of

absolutism with a backward feudal economic structure, it could not cope with the inordinate economic problems that faced it; the situation was worsened by the reactionary feudal policies of its rulers.

Manufacture that grew up in the main Italian cities during the 14th and 15th centuries continued to exist there in subsequent centuries. The 16th century saw not so much a decline as considerable changes in industry—the old workshops were reorganized, new ones were opened, technological and organizational improvements were introduced that brought about an increase in output, especially in the silk-weaving and printing shops, mechanical means began to be used for working linen, a wheel was invented for spinning gold and silver threads which could do the work of twenty, improvements were made in the printing and illustrating of books, and printing began to be carried out on a large scale—in the first ten years of the 16th century alone 723 editions were published in Italy's four largest cities.

During the first half of the 17th century the restructuring process in manufacture was seen in the transfer of industry from the major cities to the smaller towns that were free from corporative traditions. Thus in Milan industry moved from the city to the outlying towns of the duchy and in Como it moved to the surrounding villages, some of which often lay at quite a distance. And though there was a drop in silk-weaving in cities like Genoa, Pavia and Bologna, it flourished in the smaller towns of Piacenza, Pisa, Verona and Vicenza as well as in the villages where there was a cheap labour force and no guild prohibitions. In the late 17th century iron ore mining and glass making were developed. The uneven development of manufacture in Italy corresponded to the regional character of the country's economy and political structure.

Agrarian evolution. The formation of manufacture was one of the indicators and one of the sources of the new socio-economic conditions that characterized the period of absolutism. To a considerable extent the village formed the basis of early-capitalist manufacture. But here not only were the essence and structure of artisan production changed, a complete restructuring of the whole agrarian sector—the main sector in feudal society—also took place. Village farming continued to play the dominant role in the economy of the West European coun-

tries and it was here that the majority of their populations lived. Thus in France more than 13 million lived in the countryside out of a total population of 15 million.

Under the "price revolution" the monied form of feudal rent—whether to the lord, the Church or the state—began to be more important. Indirect taxes grew to reach 4 million livres in France in the 15th century and 9 million by the mid-16th century. As well as working the land, a peasant who had become a freeman by the 15th century was forced to earn extra money in the village workshops or even sell his censive, and hire out a plot of land, thereby becoming a sharecropper. In this way forms of semi-capitalist relations appeared in the villages. Some of the peasants lost their land and either went into the army or wandered from place to place working as hired or day labourers. Part of the peasants' censives was bought up by the rich townsmen and the better-off peasants, and large economic enterprises run on capitalist principles were set up there, although not infrequently the new masters would simply rent out the land without making any changes in the old mode of farming. The influence of usurious capital grew in the villages undermining the old agrarian system. All in all, this pointed to the first roots of an agrarian revolution.

In England the process was more acute. Here the new nobility and the peasant farmers began to organize entrepreneurial capitalist undertakings in the agrarian sector. The reason why these processes were so intensive in England was the fact that from the late 15th century the peasants were being driven off their land which was being enclosed for the mass breeding of sheep. This, in turn, resulted in the former agricultural labourer becoming a poor vagrant or a hired worker and the new master receiving rent from the big stock-rearers. The new owners of the former monasterial lands (as a rule, they were bourgeois-type landlords) formed specialized capitalist-type undertakings for making bread, meat, wool and other agricultural products.

The forced dispossession of the peasantry was the main cause of the agrarian revolution, which led to a radical restructuring of landownership and farming and turning the latter into a bourgeois-type economy. Whole villages disappeared and their populations were scattered in the name of the unseen profits that were brought in by the new forms

and new branches of farming and which ultimately resulted in the formation of capitalist production in agriculture. Therein was the socio-economic essence of the agrarian revolution in the era of absolutism.

Agriculture in Spain in the 16th century also showed certain changes. Foreign trade, particularly with the New World, encouraged agricultural development. Large areas of formerly waste land were planted with olives and vines, as were commune land taken from the peasants and lands purchased from the towns or the king. The rich city-dwellers became masters of the land by taking it as security for loans or buying up peasant allotments. As a rule, these lands were worked by peasants, who had lost their own land and become hired labourers. Not infrequently the land was rented out by the new owners. This upsurge in agriculture took place at the same time the peasants were being ruined through falling into the hands of the money-lenders. One terrible means by which the peasants were ruined in the early part of the 16th century was the *mesta*—an alliance of stock-breeders who drove their sheep in autumn from Castile to Estremadura in the south and in the following spring to the north again. These vast flocks knocked down fences, trampled fields and ruined orchards and vineyards. The peasants were then forced to leave their villages and become poor vagrants or hired labourers. These developments were similar to those in England, but the socio-economic conditions of Spain and the reactionary policies of the kings resulted not in an agrarian revolution, but in pauperism, the ruination of the country and feudal reaction.

In fragmented Italy, where semi-capitalist sharecropping appeared as early as the 13th and 14th centuries, during the period of feudal reaction in the 16th and 17th centuries new types of enterprise in the agrarian sector of the economy gradually appeared, but their growth was far from even in the various parts of the country. The 16th and 17th centuries saw the expropriation of the Italian peasantry and the latter being driven from their land. This amounted to separating the direct producers from the means of production, a development similar to what had taken place in France, England and Spain. Medium and large-scale bourgeois property began to grow and elements of capitalist management began to appear among the new bourgeoisie and even the Church landowners. In the 17th cen-

tury a group of major *affittuarios* or *fittanzieros* was formed in the Padua Valley. These had vast resources and acted as middlemen between the big landowners and the *coloni*. Similar to the Lombard *affittuarios* were the rural merchants in Agro Romano and the *gabellots* in Sicily. This agrarian bourgeoisie who rented out land concentrated agricultural products in their own hands and organized their selling on a wide scale. In the 18th century the major workforce in the large farms belonging to the agrarian bourgeoisie was the hired day labourers. This distinctive agrarian evolution took place in only certain regions and its development was uneven and incomplete, which remained a characteristic feature also for the political evolution of Italian regional absolutism.

New classes and social strata. The social and economic development of Western Europe and the emergence of early capitalist undertakings took place in a feudal society, in which new classes and social strata were being formed.

With varying degrees of intensity and in various forms the old social strata and traditional feudal estates began to break up in all the countries of Western Europe and two new classes were formed—the bourgeoisie and its future antipode, the urban and rural pre-proletariat.

The dominant class in France—its first and second social estates—were the nobility and the clergy, both of which were not obliged to pay any taxes. However, the “price revolution” hit the middle and petty nobility heavily, inasmuch as their income came from fixed rents levied on the peasants. They sought a way out either through court service or in performing clerical duties granted by the king. The middle and petty nobility, therefore, were the social mainstay of royal power which protected them from the arbitrariness of the higher nobility. The latter, with the exception of those who served at the royal court, retained their aristocratic privileges and constituted a force acting against the centralization of the country and the strengthening of the king’s power.

The state apparatus began to be supplemented from among the ranks of the newly forming bourgeoisie—the merchants, the usurers and the industrialists who bought positions in the civil service, many of which also carried the right to a title. Thus social diffusion occurred with the expansion of the

class of the old ancestral nobility through the new bureaucratic nobility. Some of the bourgeoisie became ennobled by simply buying landed estates together with the title they conferred. The merchants and bankers who remained in the third social estate either advanced credit-loans to the state or bought the right to farm taxes (this latter involved the state taxes in advance in a lump sum and then collecting them from the people at considerably increased rates). The industrialists and merchants could also receive royal patronage from a monarch interested in increased revenue. But at the same time the tax policy of the state and the contradictions between the nobility and the bourgeoisie frequently set the latter against the feudal system and all its oppression.

The main class of the working people—the peasants—held according to feudal law small plots of land and were freemen.

But the number of hired labourers in France was on the increase. The majority of these came from the villages where they had lost their land to work in the manufacturing enterprises. This new class—the pre-proletariat—was also supplemented by artisans who had been ruined by the larger enterprises. Sixteenth century France became the arena for the first worker uprisings.

In England there was a sharp division between the old and the new nobility. The old nobility found it difficult to adapt to the new capitalist forms of economic development. They continued to receive feudal rent from the peasants or income from service to the court or the Church. Some of the old nobility, who were unable to live on the low level of feudal rent, which had lost much of its real value during the “price revolution”, sold their land and thus ceased to constitute a social stratum with an active function in the economy.

The new nobility, which during the 16th century increased its ranks with the addition of rich townsmen, civil servants and wealthy peasants, bought up the former monasterial, commune and other lands and formed a new class, the gentry, the bourgeois-type landowners. The majority of the gentry rented their land to the farmers, who paid capitalist rent to the new owners from the profits accrued through the exploitation of hired labour, which was widely employed on all the large farms. By the late 16th century the gentry’s profits were three times greater

than the revenues of the ancestral nobility and the church dignitaries. The erosion of the old feudal nobility was made easier by the traditions of the English feudal system, which did not demand rigid adherence to social estate privileges and exclusiveness. Therefore, any owner of a sufficiently large amount of land could become a gentleman and thus a member of the noble estate.

The redistribution of the land was linked to the process of social erosion and, by the mid-18th century, to the elimination of the English peasantry as a class. This was furthered by the latter's social and juridical status. The peasantry had no right of ownership over its land with the exception of the small social stratum known as freeholders, who paid their lords a small rent and had the right to freely dispose of their land. Frequently they became wealthy peasants or farmers and formed part of the ever strengthening class of the agrarian bourgeoisie. The copyholders, who formed the majority of the peasants, were not hereditary or life-long holders of their land and as they became impoverished they swelled the ranks of the cotters, or landless day labourers.

The bourgeoisie exploited the agrarian revolution that was beginning in England. They drew the cheap labour of the peasants driven from their land, and then acquired land and landed titles. In this way the English bourgeoisie became the class kin of the new nobility. This alliance would tell on the character of English absolutism.

The hired workers in the workshops were the beginnings of the pre-proletariat. Their real income was extremely low and during the 16th century fell even lower.

The class and social distinctions in England were the most radical examples in Western Europe of the ways in which the feudal system was breaking down and the bourgeois system forming.

In Spain the process of class formation was completely different. True, the early developments in the 16th century seemed to be like those in England and France: the nobility and the peasantry were already well defined classes, while the early bourgeoisie was beginning to make its appearance through the organization of manufacture and alongside it the pre-proletariat. But this social evolution which could have led to an agrarian revolution and capitalist forms of farming not only did not

have a favourable environment, but was actively held up both by the external situation and by the reactionary feudal policy within the country.

The higher nobility did not consider the economic interests of the country as was clearly evident from the activities of the sheep-rearing group, *Mesta*, which destroyed Spain's agriculture. It was these great feudal lords, from the members of the royal family downwards and including the clergy, that produced the wool for the international market and exploited commodity-money relations so destructively to strengthen the feudal class.

The petty nobility, the *hidalgos*, were ruined by the "price revolution" and forced to sell their land and seek a way out of their position in colonial adventure on the other side of the ocean.

The peasantry, particularly in Aragon, still existed in conditions of feudal dependence. The most oppressed part of these were the descendents of the Moors, the *Moriscos*, who adopted Christianity and lived mainly in Andalusia and Granada. They had to give up a third of their crops and were forced to pay heavy taxes to the state and the Church. There was a small stratum of free peasantry in Spain, but these were mainly in Catalonia and Castile.

The early Spanish bourgeoisie was a weakly developed social stratum during this period, and in the period of absolutism was weakened even further, a fact which significantly stamped its character.

Sixteenth century Italy was a society of extremely varied social strata. The feudal class was far from being homogeneous. The power of the landowners in the North and Central Italy was undermined in the 14th and 15th centuries and only restored in the 16th century. This did not mean the restoration of all its rights, but rather the formation of a new social stratum from among the urban hierarchy. The feudal lords in the south maintained their social and juridical status almost untouched.

Further differentiation began to appear among the peasantry and in the 17th century this led to the emergence of capitalist-type tenant-farmers in certain parts of the country.

The early bourgeoisie, which appeared in Italy in the 14th and 15th centuries, were far from completely dissolving into the feudal class, continuing rather their banking, trading and industrial concerns. Even the nobility, both old and new, were not against undertaking bourgeois occupations, as is

convincingly shown by the example of Genoa, while the bourgeoisie who were involved in the agrarian economy through merging with the *nobili*, did not fully lose their bourgeois character, as was the case, for example, in Florence.

The antipode of the bourgeoisie—the pre-proletariat, also grew. Thus, for example, in Genoa in the 16th century there were some 18,000 hired workers in the silk-weaving industry alone.

All these social characteristics differed according to the area of the country and this was the reason for the great variety of political structures in Italy in the 16th and 17th centuries.

The evolution of the classes and social estates during the absolutist period was very far from being a peaceful process. It was a fight to the death for whole social strata and sometimes whole classes. It was a period full of social conflict and outbreaks of acute class struggle between the peasantry and townsmen on the one hand, and the feudal lords on the other, and between the pre-proletariat and their masters. It is enough to mention the urban and rural anti-tax movements in the late 16th and early 17th centuries, such as the Va-nu-pieds Uprising in France, the peasant movements in Norfolk, Suffolk and other English counties, the largest of which was that led by Robert Ket, the Comuneros Uprising in Castile and similar movements in Valencia and on Mallorca in the 16th century, and in Catalonia and Biscaya in Spain in the 1630s-1640s, the uprising in Genoa and other Italian towns in the 16th century, the Masaniello revolt in Naples in the 17th century and the peasant movements in Piedmont, Savoy and Sardinia in the 18th century.

It was in such conditions of bitter class conflict that the absolutist states of Western Europe were formed.

The absolutist states. The social and economic changes that had taken place, the new balance of class forces that emerged and the general intensification of the class struggle demanded an appropriate new form of state under the relatively stable centralized power of an absolute monarch.

It began to be formed in France in the late 15th century. Charles VIII, Louis XII and Francisco I renounced the tradition of appealing to the social estates who at the States-General decided the amounts of tax to be levied. All important decisions were henceforth decided at the King's Council. The

army came full under the control of the king. The royal power was only limited by a judicial organ called a parliament. It registered the king's decrees, passed opinions on them and appointed a regent should the new king be a minor. Justification for all the king's decrees amounted to the phrase "for such is our will" and in this way, too, matters relating to the state budget were decided. Francisco I introduced the rank of governor—a military overseer of a province, who stood higher than the local judicial parliament-chambers and headed the states (local meetings of the social estates). In his reign, too, a concordat was made with the Pope according to which the Church of France would be subject to the King of France. Absolutism continued to be strengthened after the long civil wars, under Henry IV Bourbon and it was ultimately consolidated under Cardinal Duc de Richelieu, the First Minister of Louis XIII.

Armand-Jean du Plessis Richelieu was born in Paris in 1585 into an old but impoverished family and was the youngest of five children. His two elder brothers could both claim hereditary privileges—the first would receive the ancestral home and the second an episcopate in the Church. The third son, Armand, had to make his way in life alone. He began his career as the Marquis du Chillou and studied at the Collège de Navarre. Being military-minded he learned horse-riding and sword fighting. When his brother, the Marquis Alphonse du Plessis, retired to a monastery, Armand, now 18 years old, gave up his military training to become Bishop of Luçon. In a few months he mastered theology, but at the same time remembered to strengthen his ties with the court of Henry IV who called him "my bishop". On the recommendation of the king, Armand, now 22, went to Rome to be invested in his new office by the Pope. In Luçon he skilfully played the part of the good shepherd, taking care primarily that his reputation should reach the royal court. Two years later he went to the court where he paid careful heed to the powerful, astounded everyone with his knowledge and listened carefully to the desires of the king. He behaved at court precisely in the way he was later to describe in his memoirs in a section on the rules of conduct for a courtier who wished to make his way to power. In 1614 he became a deputy to the States-General from the clergy of Poitou and became acquainted with Marie

de Medici, the mother of Louis XIII, who in view of her son's minority was recognized as regent and his guardian. Actually the country was being ruled by her favourite, a Florentine named Concino Concini and the king's nearest relative, the Duc de Luy-nes, both of whom were just undistinguished courtiers. Marie de Medici helped Richelieu's rise to the State Council. At 37 he became Cardinal and in 1624 the king's first minister and power behind the throne.

Richelieu is a clear example of the classical absolutism. His principles and practice were outlined by him in his *Testament politique*, his *Mémoires*, and in his correspondence. Many of his thoughts have become aphorisms attesting to his penetrating intellect, wit and brilliance, although, it is true, many of them came from the works of Machiavelli and Guicciardini or from Romance folklore.

Richelieu himself gave an account of the new period of absolutism from the moment he became first minister. In France, he said, the royal power had become weakened and the wilfulness of the *grandeues* and governors was everywhere in evidence. Hence it was necessary to strengthen the absolutist state, whose aim was to ensure the might of the king. And he began with all the subtle and harsh means at his disposal to implement his policy as a result of which the whole face of France and the Christian Church was changed. He affirmed in practice the thesis that the will of the king is higher than the law, since the king makes the laws.

Richelieu put forward a programme to strengthen absolutist power so as to strengthen the state of the nobles at a time when bourgeois relations in the country were on the increase. He looked upon the nobility as one of the main nerves of the state, but the nobility had to serve the king and the state he headed, tolerating no internecine strife or separatism. Nobles who were unwilling to fight for the country, he considered, were not only of no use to the state, but a burden to it. They were like a paralysed hand that was an impediment to the body instead of a help. The bourgeoisie he believed to be a necessary and useful element in the absolutist state, providing together with the bureaucracy two-thirds of the country's taxation. In his words "The blood from the lower parts of the organism must feed the heart after it has used the blood from the higher parts". This was the period of balance in the

evolution of the absolutist monarchy when the bourgeoisie was interested in support from the state and the nobility, in profits assured by the bourgeoisie. Absolutism was a new type of bourgeois state opposed to the *grandeues* with their programme of separatism, and the antigovernmental Huguenots who were against the official Catholic Church that served the king. Hence Richelieu's laconic call to crush the Huguenots and smash the *grandeues*. This demand accorded with the classical formula of French absolutism—"one God one faith, one law one king". Richelieu as the ideologist and organizer of the French absolutist state during the 17th century adopted a clear-cut class attitude towards the lower orders. He believed that the people were like a mule which was accustomed to heavy burdens and worsened more through prolonged rest than through hard work. But like Henry IV, the first minister of Louis XIII understood the rationale of maintaining this productive force for the country believing that the work of the mule should be measured and its burden accord with its strength. This he believed was the rightful concern of a master for the workers who fed him, not the notorious declaration that all Frenchmen were equal before the law in which the king was the father of a great family. And when the Emperor Maximilian said that the King of France ruled over the French, the King of Spain over the feudal lords, while he, the emperor, only ruled over the princes, this had nothing to do with any special privileges for ordinary people living in France. What it meant in fact is that the King of France had complete control over the princes, the nobles and the ordinary people. The French absolutist state was not a supra-class organism. Its primary concern was the welfare of the privileged social estates and it was built on exploitation of the working masses, the peasants and the artisans.

Thus, in essence, too, was the absolutist state in England, although it naturally had its own distinctive characteristics. After the War of the Roses, a period of drawn-out feudal discord, the House of Tudor established itself as kings of England. The first of the Tudor kings, Henry VII, waged a bitter struggle against the feudal nobility, seizing their lands and preventing them from maintaining a retinue. Some of the barons were mercilessly done away with and favourites of the king put in their place.

Centralized government was noticeably strengthened. During the quarter of a century in which he reigned, Henry VII called parliament only seven times. Power rested in the King's Council and an extraordinary political tribunal, called the Star Chamber, was set up as a threat to all opponents of absolutist power. Extraordinary judicial courts also acted in the North and in Wales which were regions of feudal separatism. In this struggle with the baronial opposition the king relied on the new nobility, the industrialists and merchants.

The distinctive characteristics of English absolutism were rooted in the socio-economic relations which obtained in England in the 15th and 16th centuries. Here the weakening of the ancestral nobility and the bourgeoisification of the lesser nobles meant that there was no really sharp antagonism between the nobility and the bourgeoisie as was the case in France and a number of other West European countries.

As distinct from France again, the institution in which the social estates were represented, parliament, was not abolished. It was retained, albeit with a reduced role, as the legal institution of the state structure. To a great extent this was due to its social composition. The lower chamber contained representatives from the counties—the nobility, the freeholders, whose land provided an income of not less than 40 shillings per year, and the urban bourgeoisie. The cooperation between these social groups was the real reason why parliament remained. Nor did the existence of the House of Lords affect this. At one time this aristocratic institution had been the centre of opposition to the crown, but it now became a body that was subservient to the king and formed by his favour. Such a parliament was the natural rock on which English absolutism rested. Parliament decided questions relating to taxation and passed various statutes that once signed by the king became law.

The fact that taxes in England were only levied by parliament made it possible to do away with a huge bureaucratic machinery, particularly in the localities. But at the same time the royal court became a huge and expensive institution.

The fact that England was an insular state meant that English absolutism needed only a territorial militia levied by the counties in the event of enemy invasion and could get by without having to main-

tain a permanent army. As a trading and colonial power England naturally maintained a huge fleet, which was the reason for including in the text of the anthem the words:

*Rule, Britannia,
Britannia rules the waves.*

Although the class support for English absolutism was the nobility, and the absolute monarchs pursued its policy, the social evolution pushed England on the path of capitalist development and the balance of forces there was responsible for one of the first bourgeois revolutions.

In Spain the character of the absolutist state was completely different. In the early period of the country's centralization under Ferdinand and Isabella there was an alliance between the nobility and the urban bourgeoisie, although the latter consisted rather of patricians and burghers. Under Charles I a considerable strengthening of the centralized bureaucratic apparatus took place, but this bore no national Spanish character, since the king not only ruled with the aid of the Flemish, he based his whole policy on the ephemeral idea of a world Christian empire. A threatening echo to this anti-national policy came in the form of the *Comuneros* revolt in the towns and cities of Castile. At the beginning of this revolt there was a temporary alliance between the aristocracy, the nobility and the urban elite, although later the aristocracy and the nobility became enemies of the revolt. This was highly characteristic of the balance of social forces during the period of Spanish absolutism, i. e. the growing antagonism between the increasingly powerful feudal class and the slowly weakening bourgeoisie. This was the radical difference between Spanish absolutism on the one hand and French and English absolutism on the other, the latter being based on a temporary but mutually advantageous alliance between the nobility and the bourgeoisie, an alliance which played an important role in the progressive development of the country's economy.

Spanish absolutism became a colossus with feet of clay. The idea of a world empire and the attempt to put it into practice demanded enormous outlay which weakened the Spanish economy. Its finale was the theatrical tragedy of the abdication of its author and active proponent, Charles V, the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire who failed to strengthen Spanish absolutism as king of Spain Charles I. This, however,

was accomplished by his heir, Philip II, who spared nothing and no one in the interests of strengthening his state. He intervened in all the affairs of the country while ruling from his court, the Escorial, through a constant stream of memoranda. An unsociable, sullen, silent, cruel and fanatic Catholic, Philip II set out to establish the principle of Catholic absolutism weaving his policy in a complex web. What he thought to be high principles—absolutism and Catholicism—and his belief in the stability of the royal power combined in Philip II with greed and small-mindedness, a narrow outlook and a poor education despite all his pretensions to style and orthography.

The reign of the most absolute of the absolute monarchs of Western Europe, Philip II, who interfered in all the minutest details of all his state institutions and decided all questions personally, demonstrated that the essence of absolutism consisted in crude autocracy. The total power invested in the monarch further encumbered the already creaking machinery of feudal Spain, holding up practical decisions on important matters and adding to the chaos that already reigned in matters of government.

No less harmful blows to the Spanish economy were delivered by the Inquisition, which was directly subordinate to the king and whose motto was to the effect that "it is better to have no subjects at all than subjects who are heretics". In the latter part of the 16th century there were more than one hundred *autos-da-fés* on which dozens of heretics condemned by the Inquisition were burned by the lay powers "without the letting of blood and for the cleansing of the soul". The Moriscos, Muslims who had come to Christendom and were suspected of heresy were persecuted and destroyed with whole areas of their land where there were good crops ruined and artisan workshops in their villages broken up. The productive forces that in France and England helped their progressive development were undermined.

Spanish absolutism which outwardly took shape during the 1520s relied upon the feudal lords. The urban social estates, which were very much close to the bourgeois estate, lost their importance and the majority of the posts in urban government were taken over by the *hidalgos* who represented the towns and cities in the *cortes* which no longer had

the right to make laws. In this way the social estates' representation, which was similar to the States-General in France and parliament in England, was considerably weakened and, more important, made into a body that was totally subservient to the king and that existed just to levy taxes from which the nobles themselves were exempt. The whole bureaucratic apparatus of the monarchy was full of *hidalgos* and townsmen.

Spanish absolutism to a large degree relied on the *grandees*, who, although they had no political power or right to vote in the *cortes*, still received from the king honorary titles and duties, became courtiers and generally throughout the 16th century enlarged their lands and increased their economic might. The characteristic feature of Spanish absolutism was the alliance between the king, the state and the Catholic Church and the enormous role of the Inquisition as an integral part of the state apparatus and the religious orders. The influence of the Church is in large part explained by the hundreds of years of struggle against the Muslims during the period of the reconquest.

But the main social base of Spanish absolutism were the *hidalgos* (the petty or middle-ranking noblemen). Those, who were the military might of the country throughout the eight hundred years of the reconquest, had little interest in economic activity. And they continued to show little interest in this activity even later when America was being opened up and bringing them gold and silver, either as conquistadors or as officials of the governmental apparatus. The reduced productive role of the nobility was further increased by the Spanish custom of primogeniture which gave only the eldest son the right to inherit landed property. But as their role as farmers fell their riches increased and, concomitant with this, their political role, even though they lacked interest in the country's economic development. For this reason during the period of Spanish absolutism there could be no bourgeoisification of the nobility as was the case in France and England, or alliance between the new nobility and the bourgeoisie, which was the economic and social basis of absolutism.

For this reason, then, Spanish absolutism was only superficially similar to the absolutism of the other West European countries, a fact that led in that country to a strengthening of the darker

aspects of the later feudal period and to extreme economic and political weakness.

The absolutist states in Italy were highly distinctive. Their main feature was the regional character of absolutism. The Italian states had a relatively small territory which never reached national proportions. As a rule, they were seigniories that had grown up on the basis of a city-commune. A republic became an oligarchy and then later fell into the hands of one man, the seignior or the head of a house, who established his dynastic rights, like, for example, Medici in Florence and Sforza in Milan. The seignior could be formed by peaceful and even legal means, when the *podesta* was proclaimed lifelong ruler and later his descendants inherited the position. But the other, more common way was the military seizure of power by a successful condottiere or individual political figure. Irrespective of the means employed for its formation, the seignior, as a rule, made use of the institutions and traditions of the city-commune, which served to centralize and strengthen the absolute power of the seignior. The socio-economic base of the seignior was a varied combination of feudal and bourgeois elements (according to the region) which made it the source of the regional absolutist state. The 16th and 17th centuries saw a new stage in the political structure of the Italian states. The seigniories developed into territorial principalities in which there occurred a noticeable economic and political consolidation of individual regions of the country.

An example of regional absolutism may be found in the Medici seignior in Florence, which later developed into a duchy and then the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. The seigniors received these titles from the emperor, a circumstance outwardly responsible for the restoration and strengthening of feudal relations, which was not equivalent to refeudalization as such.

In the regional absolutist state of Tuscany from the 16th to the 17th century the central authority suppressed both the feudal and the communal privileges and traditions. The role of the local elective bodies and the corporative economic institutions was undermined. The feudal nobility, the clergy and the monastic orders became tools of the ruling house, despite their formal independence. The grand duke became not only the main feudal hierarchy, but the only absolute monarch.

The advisory bodies—the State Council and the Secret Council—were formed by the head of state and totally dependent on him. The executive bodies, both civil and military, were fully subordinate to the monarch. The emergence of the bureaucracy—largely from the Florentine aristocracy—meant a new social stratum, the court service nobility. The head of state, the Grand Duke Pietro-Leopoldo, justified all his decrees in the manner of the French kings with the absolutist formula: “for such is our will”.

A new state bureaucracy was formed even in such typically feudal Italian states as the Kingdom of Naples, where of the five hundred offices of state more than three hundred were sold to those who had considerable financial wealth. Thus the new bureaucratic apparatus passed largely into the hands of those of non-noble birth.

The increasing absolutist power of the monarch was also aided by juridical unification, as was the case, for instance, in the Duchy of Savoy, where in the first quarter of the 18th century a code of laws was drawn up and later in the middle of the same century a review of the laws themselves and their new codification was made.

The creation of the new state institutions occurred alongside the weakening or complete liquidation of the medieval parliamentary institutions. In Piedmont Emmanuel Philibert liquidated parliament back in the 1560s, while in the Kingdom of Naples it ceased to convene in the 1640s and only in Sicily lasted to the 18th century.

The formation of the regional absolutist states and their subsequent evolution was to influence the whole later course of historical development and the process of unification in Italy.

Absolutism in Western Europe was a new form of feudal state that corresponded to the new social and economic conditions and the balance of class forces. The absolutist authority exploited the temporary relative equilibrium between the rising bourgeoisie and the waning nobility. The precondition for absolutism was the emergence and development of early capitalism, which brought with it many material benefits to the feudal monarchs, who for that reason pursued protectionist policies towards trade and industry, subsidized manufacture, provided help in the conquest of the colonies and passed harsh labour laws. The temporary alliance between the bourgeois-

sie and the absolute monarchs in the various countries, which was mutually beneficial to both sides, had definite material foundations, although at the time there were also important political prerequisites. The absolutist monarchs used the bourgeoisie as a force that could curb the separatism of the feudal nobility and allowed its representatives to enter the growing bureaucratic apparatus of the absolutist state.

Autocracy was also necessary to the nobility as a powerful force that was capable of keeping the masses from revolt. They also gained from the centralized form of taxation, which the absolutist state levied from the population—peasants, townsmen and bourgeoisie alike—in the form of poll-tax, ex-

cise duties and tolls of various kinds. It was this source that provided the nobility with their income and various emoluments.

Thus for a time absolutism played a progressive role, promoting the development of early capitalism, strengthening state unity and creating a national culture. But the way capitalism was subsequently to develop required the complete liquidation of feudal relations. It was at this time that absolutism acted as a break on social development, thereby affirming its historical limitations.

The liquidation of feudal relations could not occur peacefully. It required a definite revolutionary restructuring, which came first of all in the realm of ideology.

The Reformation

Martin Luther. On December 10, 1520 at the campus of the University of Wittenberg in Germany Martin Luther in the presence of the students, the professors and the burghers of the city ceremonially burned the Papal Bull in which the head of the Catholic Church had excommunicated him.

At a time of extreme tension and intense controversy, when humanist theologians were being subjected to harsh criticism and Germany was being ridiculed as a “ship of fools” sailing to a “land of stupidity”, this bold act on the part of Martin Luther against the traditionally infallible power of the Catholic Church had the effect of a bolt of lightning in a keg of gunpowder.

Thus began the German Reformation. Its initiator and ideologist, Martin Luther, was born in Eisleben in Saxony in 1483. In his youth he entered an Augustinian monastery where he took the name Brother Augustus. Here he made a serious study of the Bible with the help of the general suffragan of the order, Johannes von Staupitz. Luther began, as he put it, to “think with his own head” and this brought him to a study of the roots and basis of religious faith. Unlike the teaching of the Church which put emphasis on repentance and the outward signs of piety, he came to believe that inner spiritual self-improvement was the most important thing. The young monk had in effect become a reformer,

inasmuch as inner self-improvement required no priests, no Pope and no organized Church. All this boiled down to the doctrine of justification by faith alone. But Luther did not make these inferences sufficiently clear, precise and brought to their logical conclusion. He believed that man could not develop faith independently, for it came as a gift from God. He also accepted the Catholic thesis of original sin. Nor did he fully reject the Church and the clergy, only believing that their role in society should be reduced. These contradictions and hesitations were the source of his later readiness to compromise and subsequent betrayal of the ultimate interests of the reformatory movement. Therefore it is far from correct to separate his ideological and political beliefs into two parts, the first of which was progressive, the second reactionary. For the first part contained the very germs that manifested themselves in the second.

Luther's study of the early sources of the Bible coincided with a similar direction in the studies of the humanist scholars like Johann Reuchlin, who openly opposed the obscurantist theologians from Cologne. The temporary alliance between the Christian morality of Luther and the humanism of Reuchlin affirmed that there were certain points of contact between the Renaissance and the Reformation during its first destructive, antifeudal stage,

particularly in those matters where reason, science and argument were opposed to dogma, faith and absurdity.

Luther's support for the humanists was the first step in his work that was to have enormous consequences all over Germany at a time when only in the sphere of ideology could that country lay claim to any aspirations of a national character. His second step was his opposition to Papal indulgences.

The juridical sources of indulgences went back to the old Christian communes where it was permitted to pay money for the general benefit of the commune instead of doing an *epitimia*, a form of penance, so long as the sinner repented, which by the 16th century was already of little concern to those in a position to redeem sins. Subsequently the right of granting indulgences passed to the bishop and, ultimately, of course, to the Bishop of Rome, the Pope. The justification for indulgences came from the belief that as the Lord's deputy on Earth, the Pope had at his disposal a depository of the good deeds of the righteous. From this the Pope could offer redemptions by means of indulgences.

Luther was not the first to oppose this hypocrisy. He believed that sins were forgiven not for those who had the money to buy indulgences, but for those who lived righteously or sincerely repented. A hundred years before the German Reformation the Czech reformer and enlightener, Jan Hus, was burned at the stake by the Catholic Church for opposing Papal indulgences. There were even forerunners of Luther who went even further back like the Franciscan Friar, Brother Olivius, from whom he derived ideas that were critical of Catholicism.

The general situation in Europe and the political fragmentation and weakness that laid Germany wide open to robbery by the Papal Curia resulted in the question of indulgences going beyond the level of theoretical dispute and acting as an impetus for the reformation movement which was headed at its first stage by Martin Luther. He first began to oppose indulgences during his sermons and then subsequently appealed to the bishops for support, but received no response. Then on October 31 (All Saints' Day), 1517, he nailed to the door of the palace church in Wittenberg an open letter in which he advanced 95 theses against the proofs of

Tetzel, who tried to justify on both moral and legal grounds the practice of replacing *epitimiae* with money.

These theses so far contained no direct attacks on the Papacy and they even recognized the Pope's right as head of the Church to decide all questions relating to the remission of sins. Luther believed that he was acting alone and had got involved in the matter against his will. At first he not only conceded much to the Pope, he even sincerely worshipped him. But the result of publishing the anti-Papal theses was unexpected even for its author. They provoked a stormy reaction and bitter dispute beyond the confines of Wittenberg. Tetzel replied to Luther and 800 copies of the former's theses were burned by the students at Wittenberg who were ardent supporters of Luther. A commission was set up in Rome, which insisted on Luther's excommunication. But Pope Leo X, a generous patron of literature and art, who had been raised under the Italian Renaissance, turned down this demand, not realizing what an upheaval the German Augustinian monk's theses would cause for the whole of Catholicism.

Luther's theses against the sale of indulgences became the militant programme of the new Church and the new anti-Catholic religious teaching—Lutheranism. Luther undermined the basis of Catholic dogma and organized structure of Catholicism. He proclaimed that the clergy and the Church were not necessary as intermediaries between man and God and that to say that the Lord God Himself had invested his priests with special sacraments, including the power to grant forgiveness for sins, was neither legitimate nor provable. Man, he declared, could save his soul not with the aid of the Church or its clergy, but through true inner faith.

The new teaching was like a charge of explosive force that was aimed at the foundations of medieval ideology and politics, the bearer and personification of which was the Pope and the whole Catholic Church. Man and his life on Earth were elevated to the rank of phenomena independent of the Church in contrast to the medieval worldview which belittled man and human life. Lutheranism proclaimed man's independence and freed him from the yoke of the Church. Man and his life on Earth were a natural part of the renewed Christian religion, while

lay institutions and the state were declared to have the force of religious authority. Luther believed that the source of religious truth did not lie in Papal decrees or Church ordinances, but in the canonical books of the Old and New Testament, the Holy Scripture, which theologians and priests had the right to interpret.

Socially and economically Luther's teaching reflected the desire on the part of the German burghers and the early bourgeoisie of other European countries to rid themselves of their ideological, political and to a great extent material dependence on the Catholic Church, a powerful organism whose tentacles reached throughout the whole of Europe.

But Lutheranism, too, began to have importance all over Europe since its principles—which stood for the liberation of man from the chains of the Middle Ages and the omnipotence of the Church, the recognition of his earthly aspirations and the condemnation of Papal cosmopolitanism in favour of the independent national state—served in varying degrees as the foundation for the reformed religions of other countries, like Zwinglianism and Calvinism. They became the religious credo of the anti-feudal movements and the early bourgeois revolutions.

Luther not only put forward a bold programme, but struggled in support of it, knowing full well that the reactionary clerical ideologists would claim it was the work of the devil himself. In a tract entitled, *The Talk between Luther and Diabol*, which was published in 1533 in German and the following year translated into Latin by another reformer, Justus Jonas, he has the devil say: "Your effrontery is astonishing, if you are trying to hide your shameless deceit under the name of the Church". Luther could not avoid accusations of heresy and attempts to get him to stand trial before the Curia in Rome, to which he demanded, like Hus before him, that the oecumenical council should be called to decide the question. Speaking in 1519 at a dispute with the theologian Eck, a historian of canon law and a militant papist, Luther declared that emergence of Papal power simultaneously with the Christian Church was not a proven fact, and that since Hus' teaching contained some truly Christian theses his condemnation by the church council was unjustified and therefore wrong. Later, in 1520, he declared:

"We are all Hussites". In an epistle to the Pope Luther defended Hus' teaching and questioned the high authority of the Papacy. On September 21, 1520, he was excommunicated from the Church by a Papal Bull and three months later broke completely with the Papacy. When Charles V, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, called the Reichstag at Worms and summoned Luther to appear, his protectors warned him that he could end up like Jan Hus. To this Luther replied that "Hus was burned at the stake, but the truth did not die with him". In his reply to the Reichstag he recognized neither the position nor the infallibility of the Pope, nor the right of the council to decide all disputable questions.

One of Luther's most important works was his translation of the Bible from Latin into German. In addition he wrote a number of pedagogical works and set the psalms to music, an accomplishment that initiated German spiritual music. One of these, "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott", became the anthem of the Reformation, its Marseillaise as Heinrich Heine called it. The character of Luther's work reflected the immaturity and indecision of the new German bourgeoisie which on the one hand showed fanatic intolerance and medieval religious exultation with its belief that the end of the world and the Day of Judgement were at hand, and on the other supported the revolutionary demand for man to have the right to an independent study of the truth. The inner spiritual feeling that Luther proclaimed required no substantial changes in social relations, which of course led to compromise and support for cultural and class oppression. The logical culmination of Luther's ideological and political line was his transfer to the enemy camp during the great peasant movement of 1524 and 1525 and the transformation of the Lutheran Reformation into the tool of princely separatism and feudal oppression.

But the Reformation is not just limited to Luther and Lutheranism. It embraced many European countries and took on different forms in different countries and not infrequently different forms within the same country, since its bearers were often different classes and social estates.

Thomas Müntzer. Inasmuch as Lutheranism rejected the need for social change, it aroused the indignation of the popular masses and resulted in

the emergence of a popular current in the Reformation which merged with the Great Peasant War. At the head of this new current stood Thomas Müntzer, who saw that the point of the Reformation was to bring about social change. This he did at a time when Luther was beginning to reject his own ideas on the freedom of conscience and convictions.

In the first years of the Reformation Thomas Müntzer was numbered among Luther's supporters, and in 1520 on the latter's recommendation was sent to preach in Zwickau, in Saxony. There alongside other Lutherans he opposed the Franciscans, but far more resolutely than they did. Despite the fact that certain of the ideological sources of both Luther and Müntzer were identical, the thinking and activity of the latter were completely different. Some elements of revolutionism displayed even by Joachim of Floris gave Luther food for the critical evaluation of the Church, while Müntzer tried to develop these and practically apply them in the realities of 16th century Germany. Having gone through the teaching of the Czech Taborites, he did not stop here. During the revolutionary reprisals against the enemy and oppressors the Czech insurgents had relied not so much on the people as on Christ. Müntzer believed that "God's judgement" should be in the hands of the people.

Luther looked upon faith as a passive inner condition, a gift from heaven. Müntzer, on the other hand, saw it as something active. Luther propounded Christian love; Müntzer was more concerned with the wrath of God, by which he meant bringing it down on the oppressors. Luther considered grace as a source of faith from heaven; Müntzer considered it reason, that was accessible to everyone "with a brain in the head", particularly the peasants and the poor citizens as they had more common sense than anyone. The gleams of communist ideas and atheism showed not only his anticipation of subsequent history, but were in line with the aspirations of some of the social groups of the time and were a real factor in social movement. As distinct from Luther, Müntzer was a genuine democrat, a fighter for popular Reformation and the grandest figure in the Peasant War.

This came out both in his theories and in his practical political activity. Luther, who had studied the 15th century German mystic, Johannes Tauler, and his teaching on the external and internal worlds

of man, recognized Christian freedom only for the inner world of man, which could and should create the "Kingdom of God" in his soul, but in all else should submit to the worldly powers. Müntzer was not only disappointed in Tauler's theories, he virtually broke with medieval mysticism, turning to it only to justify his revolutionary views. By the "Kingdom of God", he understood not the inner soul, but a social system without private ownership and class distinctions.

Naturally, all these theories took on religious forms, since the feelings of the masses were fed exclusively with religious sustenance. To get a big movement the real interests of the Reformation had to be garbed in religious clothing. Luther translated the Bible into German, although there had been twenty translations before his. Luther used the Bible for criticizing Catholic dogma, whereas Müntzer only used biblical forms to express his bold theories.

Müntzer opposed not only Catholicism, but virtually the whole institution of the State Church. He was not merely a pantheist but almost an atheist. He spoke out not only for religious tolerance, but for the freedom to have any faith even to the point of saying that what a man believes is not of decisive significance. He denied the immortality of the soul and the existence of heaven and hell. He believed that the "Kingdom of God" should be built on Earth and not looked for in heaven. He called for the public ownership of property and opposed social inequality. Müntzer was not the only thinker to represent the peasant-cum-plebeian opposition and radical direction of the Reformation. Before his time there had been in Zwickau a movement known as the Zwickau Prophets, headed by a certain Nikolas Storch, who were not completely satisfied with Luther's ideas. The Zwickau Prophets believed, quite logically, that if holy grace was obtained through faith, then christening was an act to be undertaken when a man reached maturity and was consciously aware of what he was doing and so those who had been christened in childhood should be again rechristened (anabaptized). They also believed that the religious believer had direct access to God without the need for intercession by the Church or the priests, and therefore the truth could be revealed not only to the noble, but to the poor and oppressed. The gifted and educated Müntzer

went further than the "prophets", expanding and clarifying their programme of social protest and their desire to restructure society.

The teaching of the "prophets" and particularly that of Thomas Müntzer was a distinctive, but natural development under the Reformation. For the very fact that the plebeians were the only social stratum that lay outside official society, outside the world of the feudal lords and burghers, they could begin to have thoughts of going beyond the confines of the emergent bourgeois society.

Ulrich Zwingli. The stormy process of liberation from the old ways, which was the essence of the Reformation, went on not only within Germany, but throughout the whole of Europe. The specific manifestations of this process depended both on the correlation of social groupings and on the level of economic development of each individual country. One of the most interesting of these developments took place in Switzerland.

Switzerland was a small country with two socially and economically polarized regions—the developed cities and the rural forests. The urban cantons of Basel, Berne and Zürich lay on the trade routes from Italy and Southern Germany. But they were not only areas of commercial transit, they also conducted trade and financial operations themselves. Artisan workshops developed there, particularly in Zürich where they reached the level of early manufacture. This explains also the political structure of Zürich, which was controlled by an oligarchic hierarchy from the guilds. In Basel and Berne this oligarchy was formed from the most powerful patrician families. This political fragmentation was somewhat reminiscent of Germany. One specific aspect of business life in the Swiss cantons was the practice of hiring and renting mercenary soldiers. This was particularly common in the backward forest areas of Uri, Unterwalden and Schwyz, where the big landowners exploited the still-existent traditions of the patriarchal-commune system and the as yet undeveloped feudal relations to grow rich on the sale of young men for the mercenary forces of France and other countries, since the Swiss soldiers were famed throughout Europe. This trade in the blood of the most active members of the population was opposed by reformer-preachers, the most prominent among whom was Ulrich Zwingli.

Born in 1484 to the family of a rich peasant, Zwingli studied at the Universities of Vienna and Basel where he became acquainted with the work of Erasmus of Rotterdam and Pico della Mirandola. As chaplain of the Swiss troops in the service of the Pope, he became convinced of the terrible consequences of trade in Swiss young men. Thus in 1521 Zwingli became a priest in Zürich where the hiring of mercenary soldiers was strictly forbidden.

Zwingli was a convinced adherent of Luther and therefore preached out strongly against the worship of religious images (icons) and church music. He also opposed confession, fasting and monasticism. In 1523 on the decision of the magistrate of Zürich and with the active support of rich guild circles Zwingli began to introduce reforms, whose practical purpose was to fulfil the wishes of the local bourgeoisie to reduce spending on the Church.

But Zwingli's reforms did not remain confined to Zürich. They spread to other developed cantons of Switzerland—Basel, Berne and Schaffhausen—and even to some of the imperial cities of Germany. In 1528 he published a work entitled *De Vera ac Falsa Religione*, in which he went further than Luther, rejecting not only Catholic dogma on the sacrament of the communion, but also the Lutheran—on the real presence of Christ during the communion. According to Zwingli it was a purely symbolic act.

The organizational principles of the Zwinglian Church were more democratic than the Lutheran. The community of the faithful chose its own priests and preachers, while representatives from the various communities formed the highest Church authority. The highest Church authority in Zürich was virtually the only one, combining also the prerogatives of lay power.

But the relative freedom of belief in Zwinglianism did not exclude extreme intolerance even to the point of conducting military action against the Catholic "forest" cantons, in which Zürich was defeated and Zwingli, the leader of the Swiss Reformation, killed at the age of 47.

Both the early bourgeois Reformation of Zwingli and the burgher Reformation of Luther were characterized by religious intransigence as distinct from the belief in the fundamental equality of all faiths, which characterized the plebeian-cum-peasant teachings of Müntzer.

Jean Calvin. The plebeian Reformation frightened the burghers with its extreme revolutionism, but the contained character of the burgher Reformation in Germany was not enough to satisfy the early bourgeoisie in those countries where capitalist relations were more developed. This was partially the case in Switzerland, where Zwinglianism had gone further than either the teaching or the practice of Luther. To a much greater extent it appeared in Calvinism.

The early French bourgeoisie, whose origins were in the "third social estate", found their ideologist and reformer in the person of Jean Calvin. He was born in Noyon in Picardy in 1509 into the family of the bishop's secretary. He studied at the Universities of Paris, Orleans and Bourges in the faculties of theology and jurisprudence. He also studied Latin, Greek, Hebrew. Calvin could have been acquainted with Luther's teachings since Lutheranism had reached France, although it did not meet with such a response there as it did in Germany. The anti-Papal elements of Lutheranism were not so well responded to in a country where a powerful monarchy could defend the country from Papal omnipotence and depredation. Here Protestantism required other forms.

In 1534 when the persecution of the Protestants began, Calvin fled first to Strasbourg and then to Basel. There at the age of 26 the young reformer published his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, which amounted to a strict and comprehensive outline of the fundamentals of Protestantism. It was a synthesis of the teachings of Augustine, the Scholastics, the Christian humanists, Luther and Zwingli. From the Scholastic, Duns Scotus, he took the idea of the inscrutability of the Will of God which led to his thesis that the believer could be saved not through "good deeds" as in Catholicism or through "justification by faith" as according to Luther, but only by way of predetermination or being chosen. Man is "saved", i. e. goes to heaven and finds eternal bliss, irrespective of his own will or desires. Or alternatively, he "goes to hell", to eternal damnation only according to "God's choice". But this belief in predestination did not give rise to desperation or fatalism, for material success in business and other affairs began to be looked upon as a sign of being "chosen" while poverty and failure were seen as proof of "God's damnation". This justified profit,

exploitation and wealth. The advocates of these views began to encourage the hired workers and artisans that hard work for their masters and obedience to them was a sign of being chosen for eternal bliss in the life hereafter. Furthermore, the Calvinist masters increased the number of working days by abolishing the Catholic holidays. All this made Calvinism suitable as a religion for the early bourgeoisie during the period of primary accumulation. The idea of absolute predestination was supplemented in Calvinism by the thesis of divine non-intervention in the world, which prior to deism was the first step towards the bourgeois rationalist worldview.

Calvin's practical activity took place in the trade and free handicraft centre of Geneva, where his power and influence in both the ecclesiastical and lay worlds led to him being nicknamed the "Geneva Pope". His strictness and rigid code of morals marked out Calvin in his early years, when he was referred to as the "procurator-accusativus".

Calvin's theory of predestination undermined feudal ideology and the feudal system. Henceforth noble birth and social estate privileges lost their importance and their power. Naturally, therefore, Calvinism became an ideological weapon in the hands of the early bourgeoisie and the banner of the early bourgeois revolutions.

The Reformation in Italy. Italy, which had close economic ties with Switzerland—particularly in the developed trading and artisan cantons like Geneva, where the Italians had set up early capitalist workshops—was not left untouched by the events of the Reformation. In fact, chronologically speaking, Italy was the first country in Western Europe to experience its ideas. Girolamo Savonarola subjected the Papacy to harsh criticism and tried to reform the Church and lay institutions in Florence as early as the late 15th century, and his eventual burning at the stake was carried out with the active help of the Papal Curia. He drew on the anticlerical traditions of the Renaissance writers and artists, which consisted not only of humanist criticism of theological ideas and ecclesiastical texts, but also in support for the anti-Papist thinkers of other countries. Savonarola's work showed that even in such a developed industrial city like Florence with its realistic traditions the problems of the Reformation were not alien, particularly in a situation of bitter internal and external conflict.

Sharp social contradictions were also tearing Southern Italy apart and it now became one of the strongest areas for the Reformation where the ideas of Joachimism were still alive. Southern Italian Protestantism was directed against the Spanish monarchy as well as against the curia in Rome. Even among the higher clergy and the nobility the Protestants found adherents and even leaders who wanted independence for the Southern Italian Church from Rome. Prominent among these were Giovanni Valdes, Julia Gonzaga and Pietro Martira. The latter fled from Naples to Lucca where he founded a Protestant community. Similar communities appeared in other Tuscan towns like Siena and Florence. Italian Protestantism was on the move from the south to the north.

Neapolitan Protestantism was close to Zwinglianism and Calvinism, but a certain section of the Italian protestants were close to Melancthon, although he was against their love of ancient philosophy.

In southern Italy the Reformation took place on a relatively mass scale. In Naples itself there were more than three thousand opponents of Catholicism and there were also a good number in Apulia and Calabria, where they were led by Giovanni da Castofiano and Lodovico Manna. Persecution of the Protestants in the 1530s was undertaken at the command of the Roman Curia by the Theatine Order. The following decade saw the mass trials of heretics who were close in their beliefs to the Lutherans. The merciless persecution of Protestant communities and humanist circles was carried out by the Dominicans under the protection of the King of Spain, and forbidden books were consigned to the flames. Nor was the Roman Inquisition in Naples unvigilant. The Waldenses were persecuted in the mountains of Calabria, where they had fled from the towns and thousands of them were wiped out. The terror of the Inquisition led to fresh outbreaks of revolt, but these popular movements were never large enough to have any decisive influence on the course of Italian history.

Whereas Lutheranism in Germany had by the late 16th century lost its rebelliousness, Italian Protestantism had become, in a country which was the centre of Catholicism, a real and effective means of struggle to the very end of the century, particularly in view of its radicalism.

Many Italian Protestants were forced to flee their country, particularly to Switzerland with its Zwinglianists, Calvinists and Anabaptists as their like-minded people. And during the 1540s-1560s this stream of emigrants became a flood to cities like Basel, Zürich and Geneva, where they formed local communities. By the early 17th century the Italian Protestants were finding refuge in England, France, Poland and Moravia.

Italy also saw the appearance of a group known as the Erastians, who adopted a critical attitude to orthodox Catholicism on the basis of Renaissance tradition. These included prominent ecclesiastics from Modena, Viterbo and Capodistria. Another important place in the world of anticlerical humanist study was Ferrara which was once visited incognito by Calvin himself. No less interesting were the trends of the "Lutheran infection" in Lucca, where there was an open propagation of Lutheranism and even a Papal bull with an indulgence was burnt. The man who inspired the Luccan Lutherans, Constantino da Carrara, fled to Geneva like Franco Cattani, who wrote the preface to the Italian edition of Calvin's works. There was also a group of Anabaptists among the ordinary citizens of Lucca. Reformatory currents close to Lutheranism and Calvinism were also found in Florence during the 16th century. The Italian Reformation of the 16th century was one aspect of a complex and contradictory process of struggle between Renaissance traditions and the feudal camp of Catholicism and Papal hegemonism. The Reformation in Italy was influenced by the Reformation in Europe, but it still retained its own specifics both outwardly and in essence which reflected Italy's own social, economic, political and cultural characteristics.

The Reformation in England. The movement that spread throughout Europe to reform the Church, though generally speaking bourgeois in character, was also not infrequently used by the feudal classes in their own interests. This was particularly noticeable during the first stage of the Reformation in England. The refusal to submit to Rome, the break with the Pope, the formation of one Anglican Church and the dissolution of the monasteries and the sale of their lands and properties did not occur under pressure from a broad national movement, but through royal decree. The English Reformation of the 1530s began as a political measure under-

taken by the crown. Henry VIII implemented it in the interests of strengthening his position both at home and abroad. The king's divorce from Catherine of Aragon and his marriage to Anne Boleyn was only the pretext for the break with Rome. The formal beginning of the Reformation was the Act of Supremacy of 1534, according to which the king was proclaimed the head of the Anglican Church. He received the right to appoint all church dignitaries, to take the tithe and other church levies and even to make decisions on theological matters. The Church in structure, teachings and traditions remained exactly the same as before, except that at its head now stood not the Pope, but the king of England. Henry VIII considered himself a good Catholic. The royal Reformation strengthened his power, for Henry VIII now had control of both the state and the Church. Thus he, too, strengthened absolutism. The revenues of the Church did much to expand the royal coffers, but it was the dissolution of the monasteries which made by far the greater contribution. But the sale of monastery valuables only provoked psychological change, while Reformation itself aroused the discontent of the bourgeoisie and nobility because it did not go far enough—it neither democratized the Church nor made it any less expensive. But the bourgeoisie and the nobility were so powerful that at the turn into the 1550s, during the reign of the boy-king, Edward VI, under the regency of the Duke of Somerset, the Reformation was taken much further. The Church of England was made more like the Protestant with the mass and other Catholic services abandoned and worship conducted in English.

But in the latter part of the 16th century under the reign of Elizabeth I (1558-1603) this turned out to be insufficient. Initially the English Reformation had been a maneuver on the part of the dominant noble class to use the European Reformation, what was essentially an antifeudal phenomenon, in order to strengthen the feudal monarchy and nobility. But the bourgeoisie and the gentry of this period were not satisfied with partial changes. They wanted to "purify" the Anglican Church by doing away with the episcopate, with religious images, with altars and all the luxuriant trappings that were reminiscent of Catholic traditions and services. In this they came close to radical Calvinism. They called them-

selves "Puritans" (from the Latin *purus*—pure, clean) and demanded the "purification" of the Church, though they were never the most extreme movement of the English Reformation. As the socioeconomic evolution of England deepened the process of the Reformation, another more radical puritanist movement, Presbyterianism, arose in the 1570s. As proclaimed by Thomas Cartwright, a professor from Cambridge University, the Presbyterians wanted not only to further reform the whole Church, but to fragment it into self-governing religious communities that were not subject to a single ecclesiastical or lay centre, but were rather headed by elected elders. In fact, of course, these Presbyters and priests formed the oligarchical power of the rich hierarchy of the community.

Eventually the ideas of the Reformation roused up the lower orders in England. Following the teaching of chaplain Robert Browne they called for the formation of community-congregations, which not only recognized no central authority or centralized Church, but were absolutely independent in matters of religious faith. They thus became known as the Independents. They wanted a more democratic Church than the Presbyterians and in the eastern part of the country (East Anglia) and a number of other areas they set up Independent congregations.

All these puritanical movements were persecuted by the crown, particularly those that were more radical, since they undermined the monarch's position as head of the Church of England and all the political and material advantages he or she derived from it. All in all, Puritanism was a growing and increasingly strengthening bourgeois philosophy in religious form and in its radical expression it reflected some of the aspirations of the middle and lower strata of English society. Anabaptism also appeared in England at the time, particularly among the urban poor where it found a fertile environment. But like the other heresies it was cruelly persecuted.

Puritanism was directed against the feudal system in England and was thus part of the general trend of the European Reformation. The puritan bourgeois-noble opposition ultimately gave rise to the revolutionary events in England in the 17th century.

The Reformation in France. Unlike in Germany the Church in France during the Reformation pe-

riod was not dependent on the Papacy, and therefore the anti-Papal elements of Lutheranism did not receive any great response in that country. The autonomy of the national Gallic Church had already been established in the 15th century, while in the early 16th century an agreement had been signed between the king and the Pope to the effect that the king was entitled to appoint candidates for high church offices which the Pope would simply confirm. The Pope was also allowed to collect certain annual dues (annates) in France, but the larger part of church revenues belonged to the king. Furthermore, the higher church offices were in effect nothing more than a means by which the monarch remunerated the nobles, the latter being less interested in their religious duties than in the income that such offices as abbot or bishop provided. Thus the Church in France had become a state institution.

The socio-economic changes in Europe which produced the Reformation also took place in France, and therefore reformatory ideas also began to appear in that country. The first French reformer was the humanist, Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples, who in 1512, before Luther, taught justification by faith alone and that the Holy Scriptures must be seen as the source of truth. He was followed by Brissonée with his reformatory programme. Both limited themselves purely to theorizing and undertook no action. Luther won adherents in France and in the 1520s several of these Protestants were burned at the stake. The social base for Protestantism here was the third social estate, the early bourgeoisie, artisans and particularly the exploited apprentices, whose inclination to Protestantism was an expression of social protest. In Languedoc in the south of France, Calvinism and Anabaptism gained some ground among the urban plebs and the peasantry, although the majority of the latter remained indifferent to the Reformation. Calvinism virtually resulted only in a certain revival of the medieval heresy of the Waldenses. By the 1540s, however, Calvinism had reached the nobility and clergy in southern France as well as the early bourgeoisie and the artisans throughout the country. The increase of Protestantism in the south was due to the fact that the southern French bourgeoisie and nobility were inclined to separatism and desired to seize the Church lands. The peasant antitax revolts in the south used Cal-

vinist slogans, while the antifeudal peasant outbreaks in the north took place under the banner of Catholicism. The bourgeoisie in the north, which was closely linked with the royal court, providing it with loans and goods, remained true to Catholicism, the official state religion, as did the guild masters who received patents from the crown to conduct their artisan workmanship.

In the latter part of the 16th century France was shaken by the religious or Huguenot wars that lasted for a period of more than 30 years. The southern Huguenots wanted an autonomous republic that was independent of the central power of the king of France. They formed their own government and an army of 20,000. The event that sparked off this civil war was the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, August 24, 1572, when the Catholics butchered thousands of Huguenots in Paris and subsequently in other towns.

The question of religious affiliations played no decisive role in these civil wars, it was more a tactical matter. There were numerous instances of religion being changed from Catholic to Huguenot or Calvinist, or vice versa. Thus, for example, Henry of Navarre who had managed to escape during the Massacre of St. Bartholomew subsequently took up Catholicism and went over to the king's side. Later still he once more became a Protestant. Several years later, when he was offered the choice of becoming king of France or remaining a Huguenot, he is supposed to have said, "Paris is worth a mass" and once more became a Catholic. Already in the 16th century there was a difference between the political Huguenots who were fighting to set up a republic of the nobility in the south independent from the king, and the religious Huguenots for whom Calvinism expressed the social aspirations of the early bourgeoisie and the urban plebeians.

The compromise nature of the French Reformation was already apparent by the end of the 16th century when Henry IV issued the Edict of Nantes, according to which the Catholic religion was declared dominant in the country but the reformed religion was allowed to exist, while the Huguenots in the south were given the right to call a political assembly of the type of States-General and maintain castles.

The French Reformation showed that progressive early bourgeois elements did exist and that they had

created a new ideology in the religious form of Calvinism, but the feudal-absolutist forces in the country were more powerful than those of the early bourgeoisie and were able not only to defeat the early bourgeois and popular reformation, but also crush the political Huguenots, who tried under the name of Calvinism to set up a separatist republic of the nobility. Hence the insufficiently radical character of the French Reformation, which took place at a time when absolutism was strengthening its position.

The Counter Reformation. The struggle between the early bourgeois elements and the feudal lords during the later medieval period, the undermining of feudal relations and the resistance to this offered by the nobility took place essentially in the field of ideology. The Reformation in Europe showed that the breakdown and undermining of the foundations of feudal society did not yet mean that that society was at an end. The conflict between the early bourgeoisie and the feudal nobility was felt throughout the whole of the Reformation period and it resulted in a partial strengthening of the forces of the former and even on occasion, through a revolution under the banner of the Reformation, in their victory, though the feudal formation remained essentially intact with only slight alterations made to its structure. A significant result of the successes and defeats of both sides was the position of the Papacy and the whole Catholic Church after the upheavals of the Reformation.

Catholic reaction made itself felt not only in the last stage of the Reformation, but throughout the whole course of it. Probably the most outstanding example of this was the reign of Mary Tudor in England, 1553-1558. Twenty years after the reformation of the Church in England she restored Catholicism and began a reign of terror against the Protestants. But it is interesting to note that her policy was supported by the new nobility, since the lands they had received under Henry VIII were not taken away from them by the Catholic queen.

The strengthening and weakening of the two conflicting forces, Reformation and Counter Reformation, can also be observed in many of the other European countries. These fluctuations show that the whole process of the Reformation constituted the first onslaught on the weakening, but far from com-

pletely undermined foundations of feudal society, whose focus was Catholicism and its religious and lay centre, the Vatican, that was ever ready to struggle, resist and even on occasion to make compromises.

But the Papacy was forced to make its own, Catholic reformation, i. e. consent to a certain restructuring so as not to lose everything. By the end of the Reformation it was on the verge of complete collapse, having lost a large part of Germany, Holland, England, Scotland and Scandinavia and been considerably weakened in France, Poland and Hungary. Emergency measures were required to save the situation and particularly internal reforms to bring Catholicism into line with the new situation in Europe. But the restructuring of the Papacy and Catholicism was only part of a process that was embracing all aspects of feudal society in Europe, a society which was now forced to take account of a new social, economic, political and ideological situation that demanded urgent measures if the undermined foundations of the feudal system were to be propped up.

The problems of restructuring Catholicism were discussed at the Oecumenical Council, which was held in the south Tyrolian town of Trient (Tridentum) at various periods from 1545 to 1563. The Council of Trient had to make a number of concessions. It forbade the practice of both selling church benefices and keeping several church benefices in the hands of one person, a system that was known at the time as pluralism. It banned absenteeism, or the receiving of incomes from church offices by persons who in actual fact did not fulfil the functions of these offices. It did away with the practice of paying for investiture in the office of archbishop and finally it reduced the staff of the Papal Curia. But this was in fact only a rejection of the most blatant abuses on the part of the Papacy. The Council also had to accept the partial loss of church levies and secularized lands in those countries which had strong absolutist monarchs and where the situation was already a *fait accompli*. These countermeasures that Catholicism was forced to take were mainly successful in such countries as Hungary, Poland and the southern Netherlands where Protestantism was crushed.

But despite the logic of the Protestant arguments, the Catholic Church at the Council of Trient made

no concessions regarding dogma or ritual. This was in great part due to the Italian prelates who came from "over the mountains" (Ultramontani), who, as a rule, were Jesuits, members of an order that was established in 1540 by Pope Paul III under the name of the Society of Jesus which was in fact set up as early as 1537 by followers of Ignatius of Loyola.

The strengthening of the Counter Reformation led to the restoration of the Inquisition and the drawing up of a list of banned books. The Jesuit Order continues to play an important role in the Catholic Church and only recently was the Index abandoned.

The Reformation witnessed the emergence of the capitalist system and the appearance of new social strata, particularly the early bourgeoisie, and with it new forms of its ideology, particularly those that were religious.

The Counter Reformation was proof that the feudal system was still strong and that its political superstructure was viable and efficient.

But the Reformation was not only the first ideological blow to feudalism, it also gave rise to intense social conflict. It was under the banner of the Reformation in Europe that the early bourgeois revolutions took place, one of which culminated with the victory of early bourgeoisie.

The Early Bourgeois Revolutions

Bourgeois Revolution Number One—such is the name that has been given to the social and ideological upheavals which shook Germany in the 16th century. This bourgeois revolution took place under religious garb of the Reformation, which itself was closely interconnected with the class battles of the Great Peasant War. The elements of capitalist production had already appeared in Germany in the 15th century and by the first decades of the 16th century they were gathering force. The merchant entrepreneurs were expanding and taking over from the isolated artisans in the textile and metal-working industries. The immediate producers were losing their independence and their position was becoming virtually that of hired labourers. Taken collectively, they now formed a group each of whom plied his own individual trade, a development that ultimately resulted in the division of labour that characterized manufacture. By the early 16th century the mining joint-stock associations were becoming capitalist companies. This was particularly important for the fact that the mining industry and especially silver mining, was extensively developed employing tens of thousands of workers by the first decades of the 16th century. This put Germany economically speaking at the head of Europe between 1470 and 1530 and for that reason it was here that the first bourgeois revolution took place.

Early capitalist manufacture had an important

effect on agriculture. The textile industry, for example, needed flax, hemp and wool and this meant an overall expansion of the lords' lands at the expense of the peasants' allotments and the seizure by the feudal lords of the common lands.

Sheep rearing was considerably developed and the sowing area for industrial crops enlarged. But in Germany this did not, as it did in England, result in the end of the peasantry as a class and the formation of the pre-proletariat. Rather, paradoxically, the opposite happened. The need to increase the number of workers in agriculture drove the feudal lords to the mass enslavement of the peasantry and to increasing the amount of corvée. The spread of early capitalist relations in industry was conducive to the upsurge of agriculture and the marketability of its products due to the greater feudal exploitation of the peasants or a starvation short-term land lease. The progress of early capitalist relations resulted in a second enslavement of the peasantry and in feudal reaction. These social and economic contradictions were extremely bad for Germany as a country and utterly catastrophic for the peasants. Added to this was the religious and feudal exploitation of the peasantry which obliged them to pay tithes on their grain, cattle and vegetables. This depredation of the peasantry by feudal lords and the Church brought the situation in the countryside to boiling point, while the Papal depredation of Germany as a whole

became a national calamity. Freedom from the spiritual and material oppression of Rome became a task of national importance. It was in these conditions that the flames of the first bourgeois revolution were kindled. An idea of the social contrasts of the time can be gained from the *Weltbuch* of Sebastian Franck which was published in the 16th century. According to Franck, the German nobility considered itself good for the fact that it did nothing else but hunt; it passed time in riding and falconry, living well, receiving an abundance of rents, ranks and taxes, and none of them hardly cared on what grounds they took them. Further Sebastian Franck wrote that the people who worked by the sweat of their brow, the peasants, the colliers, the shepherds were a hard working people who were at the beck and call of their masters and excessively burdened with corvée, dues, taxes and tolls.

The appeals of the reformers stirred up the peasantry, particularly the revolutionary propaganda of Thomas Müntzer. He called (particularly to the apprentice miners) for action, for their swords "not to run dry of fresh blood".

But Müntzer and his supporters did not confine themselves just to making passionate appeals to destroy their oppressors. They also drew up a political programme, entitled the *Artikelbrief*, which was a programme of radical political and social change and which proposed the formation of a society based on universal equality and justice. Essentially, what he wanted was a democratic republic, based on the principle of a sovereign people. The appearance of this programme at a time of peasant war, despite its illusory nature, attests to the fact of a revolutionary situation existing at the time capable of producing a programme that was antifeudal in both purpose and form. The rejection of the feudal hierarchy and the monarchic structure of society was in itself the potential equivalent of wishing to set up a new bourgeois society.

The programme was as uncompromising as were the appeals of Müntzer. It called for an end to all feudal castles and monasteries as centres of oppression, and for the destruction of the oppressors like "members cut from the body". The feudal lords, however, could be allowed into the new republic, which they called a "Christian Union", but only on the condition that they completely renounced their

social status and became workers. This naive plebeian humanism was one of the first—after the 14th century programme of the Florentine *ciompi*—attempts to arrive at a formula for liquidating the exploiters as a class. The utopian idea of freedom, equality and fraternity was later to characterize the programmes of other bourgeois revolutions in the period prior to the establishment of bourgeois power, which being essentially class in content, retained all these rights for the bourgeoisie alone. The fact that the *Artikelbrief* programme allowed for the feudal nobility to enter into a national alliance meant that its liquidation was to be voluntary, while the retention of their old status gave rise to the thesis of their merciless liquidation as enemies of the human society based on the "divine law". The Peasant War itself showed the utopian character of appeals for the nobility to become workers voluntarily, and revealed the extreme brutality, treachery and class limitations of the feudal lords. The basic force behind the revolution were the peasantry and the urban poor. The burghers, who had not yet developed into the class of the bourgeoisie, showed inconsistency, an ever greater readiness to compromise and a total inability to lead the armed struggle of the peasantry. The peasants themselves were disorganized and frequently too trusting in their talks with their class enemy who was both cunning and in possession of well-armed forces.

The revolt broke out in the summer of 1524 on the Upper Rhine. It was subsequently followed by similar outbreaks on the Upper Danube and the South Schwarzwald, the peasants in all cases demanding an end to the taxes. In early 1525 there were peasant uprisings in Upper Schwabia, Franconia, Thuringia and Saxony. The revolt had spread across the country. The peasants in Schwabia stormed monasteries and castles and tried to set up a new order. The three main contingents formed a "Christian Union", which produced a programme entitled "The Twelve Articles of Memmingen". The Articles of a moderate antifeudal character, demanded an end to serfdom, a reduction in corvée and other duties, the right to use communal land and the right to elect priests. Revolutionary ferment also broke out in the towns of Schwabia where the plebeian masses opposed the patriciate. The talks which were held between the peasant contingents and the feudal hierarchy of the Schwabian Union

were aimed at weakening the movement and preparing the groundwork for its ultimate collapse. The feudal forces under Georg Truchsess suddenly and in violation of a truce fell upon the insurgents and routed part of the contingent, but they were unable to break the main peasant force. The movement now spread like wildfire across the whole of Central Germany. Several large peasant forces gathered in Franconia—the Bright Band headed by two burghers, Georg Metzler and Wendel Hipler, the Black Band headed by the poor knight, Florian Geyer and the Neckar Valley Band, headed by the peasant, Jacob Rohrbach. Rohrbach's revolutionary tribunal sentenced the great feudal lords to death, but the tone here was set by the burghers, particularly Hipler, a former count's chancellor, and the author of the Heilbronn Programme. This was mainly concerned not with defence of the interests of the peasantry, but with imperial reform. This reform was designed to undermine the regional absolutism of the princes and subject the princes and the rest of the nobility to a single imperial state which would have its own unified monetary system and its weights and measures coupled with the liquidation of internal customs barriers and the introduction of free enterprise. The events in Franconia and its political programmes showed that certain features of the early bourgeois revolution had appeared in Germany.

The Franconian Programme showed the limitations of the burghers. It not only did not call for the end of the feudal system, but postponed the demands of the peasants until the implementation of German imperial reform.

The heroic resistance of the peasants who tried to drive back the perfidious feudal lords eventually came to nothing. Their forces were crushed and their leaders, Rohrbach was burned on a slow fire, while Geyer perished in battle.

The revolts in Thuringia and Saxony, which were headed by Thomas Müntzer, were extremely well organized. He led the anti-patrician political uprising in Mühlhausen, which was supported by the Thuringia miners and which established contacts with the insurgents in South and Central Germany. The size of the peasant armies ran into many thousands—in Schwabia to almost 40,000—and only their willingness to hold talks stopped them from defeating the 10,000-strong force under

Truchsess. The nobles of Saxony and Hesse amassed a huge force against Müntzer's small army of 6,000 and despite the latter's heroic resistance, the considerably superior forces of the enemy broke through the well defended lines of their camp, killing about 5,000 of the insurgents and executing their leader. The flames of the first bourgeois revolution in Europe blazed until 1526.

The political disunion and inexperience of the peasantry, the treachery and readiness to compromise on the part of the burghers and the conditions of economic and political fragmentation which characterized Germany brought Revolution Number One to its tragic finale. No less dramatic, but more successful was the second of the early bourgeois revolutions—that in Netherlands.

The first victorious revolution. During the 16th century the Netherlands comprised the territory of what is now Belgium and Luxemburg as well as certain parts of Northern France. In the 16th century the country was part of the huge Spanish empire and was governed by a viceroy. At the same time there was such a governmental body of the feudal aristocracy and the urban patriciate as the States General which made laws and set taxes.

The economy of the Netherlands, particularly in its northern provinces, was experiencing at the time the development of early capitalist relations. But Spanish absolutism, which exploited the Dutch economy for its own use, acted as a brake on the development along a capitalist path. Spanish absolutism relied for its support on the Catholic Church, reactionary strata among the Dutch nobility, the urban patriciate and the medieval burghers. And these contradictions could be solved only through revolution. During the 1660s discontent with Spanish rule and the strictures of the Catholic Church began to increase both in the towns and the villages.

Opposition to orthodox Catholicism began, as in Germany in the Reformation period, to merge with the growing national self-consciousness of the Dutch people. Armed masses gathered to hear the Calvinists and the often more revolutionary-minded Anabaptists, resisting the Spanish-Catholic authorities and freeing those who were to be sent to the stake as heretics. Provinces like Holland, Flanders and Brabant were engulfed in waves of revolt both in the rural areas and in the towns, and all strata of society were included—the peasants, the urban poor, the

progressive bourgeoisie and the nobility. The latter tried to introduce religious reform on the Lutheran model which would bring the monasterial and church lands into the hands of the nobility. The viceroy was handed a petition in which the nobles outlined their demands and at the same time warned the Spanish rulers that failure to carry them out would provoke a popular uprising which was against the interests of both the Spanish and themselves.

Unlike these compromise moves on the part of the nobility the popular masses broke out in open revolt in the autumn of 1566. In most of the Dutch provinces the peasants and the day labourers, the artisans and the manufacture workers, the dockers and the sailors fell upon the monasteries and churches, which were the ideological and economic bastion of Spain's power. Some five thousand monasteries and churches were taken in this manner by armed bands of the people which destroyed charters for the use of land, promissory notes, icons and statues of the saints, while valuable churchwares were taken away for the magistrates to use for local needs. The Catholic priests and monks were beaten up and driven off. From the destruction of the icons which was carried out in this first Dutch bourgeois revolution came the term "iconoclasm".

The Spanish were forced to make concessions. They promised to do away with the Inquisition, allow practice of the Calvinist faith and make a certain amount of relaxation in the laws. The Calvinist bourgeois leaders and the nobility on their side, however, frightened by the popular movement, made peace with Spanish absolutism thus making it easier to put down the revolt. But they soon paid for their pusillanimity and conciliation. With the revolution crushed the Spanish reneged on all their promises and began a reign of military and religious terror. Heading the several-thousand-strong army that now held sway in the Netherlands was a typically Spanish grandee, the cruel, haughty and fanatically Catholic, Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, Duke of Alba, who erected a monument to himself in Antwerp. The whole Dutch nation he looked upon as "unburned heretics", and even those who took no part in the iconoclasm but did nothing to prevent it he believed should be hanged. In the six years of Álvarez' rule the Council of Troubles, which was justly called the Bloody Council, did away with

more than 18,000 persons. The property of the condemned became the property of the King of Spain so that Álvarez could declare that he had given the crown 500,000 ducats.

The Spanish empire, on which the sun never set—its colonies being on both sides of the Atlantic—seemed unshakable, and its proud and cruel rulers believed that the sword and the cross and a reign of merciless terror were guarantees of order and peace. The leaders of the aristocratic opposition, Count Egmont and Admiral Horn, were beheaded at Álvarez' command, but their commander-in-chief, the Prince of Orange, fled abroad.

But the Spanish oppressors forgot one thing—the strength of the resistance of a freedom-loving people, which could fight back bitterly from the sea for its native country and build on it a flourishing economy. The peasants, the artisans and the workers in manufactories fled to the forests and waged partisan war against the Spanish. The "Beggars of the Forest" from Flanders joined the "Beggars of the Sea" from Holland and Zeeland to fight the Spanish overlords. On their hats they wore a badge in the shape of a crescent with the inscription "Better Turks than Papists". They attacked Spanish ships and Spanish garrisons in the coastal towns, and in April 1552 took the port of Briel. This victory encouraged the "Beggars" and soon the whole of the Northern Netherlands was engulfed in popular uprisings, and Holland and Zeeland were liberated from Spanish tyranny. This success led to the formation of an independent republic in these two provinces.

Álvarez took countermeasures and the two undefended towns of Zutphen and Naarden were taken and burned to the ground, their inhabitants being put to the sword. He took Haarlem after several months of heroic defence and besieged Leyden. But the "Beggars of the Sea" took the extreme measures of opening the sea floodgates and the Spanish were forced to retreat. This bitter fighting resulted in the popular movement being strengthened, the Spanish mercenaries fleeing from the north, and an uprising in the south. Álvarez' policy of terror and destruction collapsed and he was recalled to Spain. The revolutionary sections of the bourgeoisie, backed by a broad popular movement, destroyed the monasteries and churches, burned the country estates of those noblemen who had supported the Spaniards,

and set up committees that were to be the new organs of government.

The Prince of Orange returned to the Netherlands and tried to contain the revolutionary war and gain control of the country with the support of the feudal nobility and the big bourgeoisie and through a compromise agreement with the King of Spain. This policy enabled him to form a reactionary noble government in the south which retained Catholicism and pursued a pro-Spanish line.

In answer to this betrayal on the part of the nobility, the revolutionary northern provinces united under the Union of Utrecht, which became the basis for a future independent bourgeois state. The States-General which proclaimed in 1581 the end of Philip II as sovereign of the Netherlands, became to all intents and purposes the republic's governing body. Thirty years later the United Provinces received the virtual recognition of Spain which signed a treaty with them.

The republican system in which the main political role was played by the merchants was a democracy of a very limited bourgeois type, and the first of its kind in Europe. Early capitalist relations, which progressed during the 16th and 17th centuries aided the manufacture of rope, rigging and fabrics, as well as ships. In the fishing fleet alone there was more than 1,500 boats. Capitalist farming methods began to be used more and more in agriculture. The Dutch merchant fleet in the 1630s had almost 35,000 ships, making it the largest in the world. The Netherlands carried on extensive international trade, ousting the Spanish and Portuguese from their colonies. They seized lands in America, where they founded the town of New Amsterdam, which was later renamed by the English, New York. The Amsterdam Stock Exchange and the Amsterdam Bank acquired international importance. This was the result of the first victorious bourgeois revolution in Europe, which could be said to have ushered in the era of capitalism, the beginning of Modern

Times. The country which had now become liberated from economic, political, religious and national oppression could advance far ahead, overtaking at least for a while all the other countries of Europe.

But at the same time the first victorious bourgeois revolution was the first historical instance of the fact that not one bourgeois revolution, even the most radical, could bring the broad masses of the people material well-being or genuine freedom. By 1648 the popular masses in Holland suffered more from excessive labour, were poorer and lived under a harsher oppression than the peoples of the rest of Europe.

Of course, the Dutch revolution did not bring about a complete end to feudalism. The people were the main force behind the revolution, but its fruits were mainly enjoyed by the conservative merchant hierarchy and not the revolutionary bourgeoisie, who were immature and at a stage of early capitalist relations. The merchant oligarchy allied itself with the nobility and maintained the vestiges of feudalism. The economic, social and political reforms introduced by the ruling circles were indecisive and in the nature of a compromise.

Despite its primitive character, the very fact of a successful bourgeois revolution in the 16th century speaks of the beginning of the capitalist era. The subsequent revolutions—in England and in France—show a deepening of the process of liquidating feudalism and a strengthening of the capitalist system. The English revolution in the 17th century was more radical and the French revolution in the 18th century had consequences affecting the whole of Europe.

Each of these revolutions was a century ahead of its predecessor, not only in time but also in content, but the bourgeois revolution in the Netherlands was the first toll of the bell that signified the end of feudalism and the beginning of the more progressive capitalist era.

Medieval Culture in Western Europe

The formation of medieval culture. The formation of medieval culture, which in its developed form was characterized by the domination of the

Chapter 1

Church and the emergence of ideology which expressed the interests of the classes of feudal society, was an exceptionally complex process and

lasted for several centuries. In the sphere of culture, where revealing connections in human history are extremely important, the continuity between the dying ancient world and the newly developing medieval period which characterized the transition from the slave-owning socio-economic system to the feudal formation was a factor of considerable importance. At the same time this continuity was not always evident, since the Christian culture that had crystallized in the West stood opposed to the ancient world with its pagan worldview.

Medieval culture took its first steps when what had for many centuries been the monolithic world of Rome collapsed. Wave upon wave of barbarians invaded Europe and barbarian kingdoms came and went. Yet both the barbarians who had once been acquainted with Roman civilization, like the Ostrogoths, and those who had had little knowledge of it, but were now occupying the centres of former Roman influence, could not but experience the powerful influence of Roman traditions (economic, political and cultural). Although Rome fell, the idea of universalist statehood to which it gave birth continued to dominate the social consciousness of the epoch. It inspired the Byzantine Empire, the Empire of Charlemagne and the Holy Roman Empire, the latter under its German emperors, as well as the Russian idea of the "Third Rome" and the interminable theocratic pretensions of the Papacy. It was an organic part of the ideology and culture of the Middle Ages.

Without attempting to deny the progressive barbarization and gradual decline of culture and the frequent dying out of intellectual life in Western Europe, antiquity nevertheless made itself very much felt in medieval civilization. This is not to say, of course, that there was any direct continuity with the classical world. Many of the works of the ancient writers and the achievements of ancient learning were consigned to oblivion in the early medieval period and some were lost forever. Furthermore, the process of barbarization and decadent tendencies in culture had been manifestly evident in later antiquity, i.e. from the 3rd to the 5th century. That which was later to be accepted or rejected by the Middle Ages, was not and could not be the ancient, classical heritage.

The philosophy of Neoplatonism, which developed during the 3rd and 4th centuries had points of

contact with Christianity in many cardinal issues, but later fed medieval thought in interpretations that were far from always orthodox Christian. In ethics, for example, the search for the ascetic ideal came not only from Christian concepts. An enemy of the new religion like Julian the Apostate came to affirm the same moral imperative on different world-view principles, seeing in ascesis the way out of the moral abyss into which late antique society had fallen.

Art in the early Middle Ages saw a continuity of those tendencies which had developed in the 3rd and 4th centuries. Culture in late antiquity achieved, on the one hand, an extreme state of refinement, while on the other, an extreme simplicity and crudity that made it suitable for the requirements of a society that was gradually becoming barbarianized. This latter trend was particularly noticeable in education which took on an increasingly primitive and utilitarian character. The most common school textbook in medieval times was that written in the 5th century by Martianus Capella, a Neoplatonist from North Africa, for the needs of schools in late antiquity. But this did not prevent it from becoming the "source of all knowledge" for innumerable generations of medieval scholastics. Furthermore, the whole system of medieval education was largely based on the principles of the later Roman school, suitably interpreted and included within the framework of Christian intellectual culture. Later classical traditions in literature and philosophy were also characteristically assimilated and particular importance here goes to three great scholars of the period, Boethius (circa 480-525), Cassiodorus (490-585) and Isidor of Seville (570-636). Their encyclopaedic works, their general conception of culture in the forthcoming era and their legalization of ancient culture in conditions of an ever growing Church monopoly over intellectual life were of enormous importance for the cultural life of the Middle Ages.

The principles of the old culture could be assimilated by the new without necessarily having direct acquaintance with the writings of its ideological and prominent figures. The intellectual dominants of culture usually find their way into the social consciousness in forms that are readily accessible to the ordinary understanding and can be assimilated, as it were, second hand. This is what happened with

many of the values of classical culture which were learned through school and everyday life.

An important role in the assimilation of the classical heritage was also played by Christianity, which though rejecting pagan culture, could not completely abstract itself from it. Christians not only destroyed the temples of the ancient gods, but turned them into churches, while the statues of the sages became the statues of the holy (one example being the much revered statue of the Apostle Peter in the Vatican). The fathers of the Church were also fairly resolute about introducing elements of the ancient intellectual doctrines into their works. This was sometimes done to make it appear that they had the support of the great pagan thinkers of antiquity, but more frequently to provide crushing criticism. In this way the works of the ancient writers, if only in fragmented form, were willy-nilly preserved and their thoughts passed on.

Thus simplified, schematized, substantially transformed and passed on in different ways, the classical heritage nevertheless became an essential component of the intellectual synthesis of the Middle Ages, the basic element of which was Christianity.

Christianity became an umbrella covering the most varied views, ideas and attitudes—from subtle theological doctrines to pagan superstitions and barbaric rites. Christianity during the period of transition from antiquity to the Middle Ages was, for all its pontifical assertion, an extremely receptive (within obvious limits) religion, which did much to meet the needs of the people's consciousness. This to a large extent explains its gradual hold on society and the fact that it absorbed and united other ideological and cultural phenomena into a relatively unified structure. Christianity, of course, was not out primarily to save the vestiges of classical education and culture in a barbarized world. It simply used them to strengthen its own ideological and political position in it. This is especially evident in the activity of Pope Gregory I and in that of the Benedictines and the Irish monks, which already in the first centuries of the Middle Ages gave the Church a monopoly over spiritual and intellectual life.

But at the same time early medieval culture was not just an amalgam of the ancient classical heritage and Christianity. Another extremely important source was the cultural life of the barbaric peoples, their folklore, their art, their customs, their predi-

lections and their own distinctive outlook on the world. Elements of "barbaric consciousness" are retained throughout the whole of the medieval period and its own distinctive culture is much indebted to them.

The formation of medieval culture was a complex process. It was a synthesis of late classical Christian and barbaric cultures in which Christianity gradually achieved dominance.

The Carolingian Renaissance. The first fruits of this triple interaction were harvested during the Carolingian Renaissance.

The term "Carolingian Renaissance", like the less often used "Ostrogoth", "Visigoth", "Ottonian" and other "renaissances" of the Middle Ages is highly conditional. They were events of a completely different order than the Italian and European renaissances of the 14th to 16th centuries.

The cultural upsurge that took place in the reign of Charlemagne (768-814) was neither anticlerical, nor genuinely humanist. It was also out of sympathy with attempts to restore the ancient classical models, whether political or cultural. Charlemagne's political ideal was the empire of Constantine the Great which was culturally and ideologically based on a consolidation of the tribal states under the Christian religion. Holy Scripture was officially declared the only ideological and cultural basis of daily life and the whole education system.

Although Charlemagne himself was illiterate, according to his biographer, Einhard, he was continually concerned to increase the number of literate and scholarly people in his state. In 787 he passed the *capitularies*, a law decreeing that schools should be set up in all the dioceses and at every monastery, and that the children of the lay as well as of the clergy should receive education. One of these *capitularies* stated that "each man should send his children to school, which the children should diligently attend until they had been educated sufficiently". He also instituted an alphabet reform and the compilation of school textbooks.

The centre of education in the Carolingian Empire was the court academy at Aachen, the capital, which attracted all the most educated people in the Europe of the time. These included Peter of Pisa, the grammarian, and Paulus Diaconus, the historian, from Italy, Leiardus from Bavaria, Theo-

dulf the Visigoth and Dungal from Ireland. The most important figure in the Carolingian Renaissance was Alcuin, the Anglo-Saxon, who believed that the ancient classical heritage could be used to give a certain splendour to the only true Christian teaching.

Charlemagne strove to unite both the power of the Church and the state in his own hands. His cultural policy reinforced the power of Frankish arms and the cogency of the royal *capitularies* with the Christian faith, the Latin language and the unification of education and thinking.

After Charlemagne's death the cultural movement he had inspired rapidly declined. The schools were closed, the lay influence gradually waned and intellectual life once more became concentrated in the monasteries. Here there were libraries and places where books were copied by the scribes. The overwhelming majority of manuscripts on which

our editions of the ancient authors today are based, were copied in the 9th century in the quiet of the monasterial scriptoria. But the main occupation of these scholarly monks was not with classical Greek and Roman literature, but with theology which absorbed almost all the modest intellectual aspirations of the epoch.

By the 10th century the stimulus that had been given to European cultural life by the Carolingian Renaissance was dying out under the pressure of continued wars and internecine strife and the social fragmentation and political decline that they caused. There began a period of "cultural silence" which lasted almost to the end of the 10th century till the time of the Ottonian Renaissance, as it has been called. Subsequently in Europe there were to be no great cultural gaps as there had been from the mid-7th century to the early 9th century and for several decades during the 10th century.

The Medieval Weltanschauung

The place of Christianity in medieval culture. Medieval culture acquired its classical form during what we refer to as the developed period, i.e. the 11th to the 14th centuries, when its specificity was manifested most clearly.

The later medieval period—the 15th and 16th centuries—saw the decline of medieval culture. A new cultural movement, humanism, began to develop rapidly and in many ways to supercede it as European civilization entered the period of the Renaissance.* But medieval culture continued to exist and in a number of European countries remained dominant, though closely interwoven with the new trends.

The pivot of medieval culture was the religious worldview, Christianity, which gave spiritual sanction to the feudal system.

This religion which had grown up on the basis of a mixture of Judaism and Hellenistic philosophy, and had absorbed numerous elements of various religious cults, was not historically homogeneous. It

had gone through its own particular evolution. Medieval Christianity was quite different from the Christianity of the first centuries when it was just in the process of formation as a particular trend among the acute doctrinal debates of the time and struggling for legalization in a socially changing world. Nor can medieval Christianity be identified with the Christianity of Constantine the Great, when the new religion was made the official religion of the state. Medieval Christianity can be said to have started when that religion became universal and began to gain not only spiritual, but political control via its own special institution, the Church, over a world that was to become nothing less than a community of believers in subjection to it. This establishment of Christianity as a *Weltanschauung* and a political doctrine is to be found in the teaching of Augustinus Aurelius (354-430) who accorded to God and His servant on Earth, the Church, the role of the organizer of human history. Once it had become a state religion and acquired not only ideological, but political status, Christianity was now suited to the needs of the new medieval world.

It is worth noting one other characteristic of medieval Christianity. It contained, as it were, two

* For the distinctive characteristics of medieval culture as a stage in the history of culture, see the section headed "Medieval Culture in Western Europe".

layers: one, that was designed for the educated people of the period who were capable of understanding theological subtleties and doctrinal disputes, and the other that was intended for the broad mass of the people subjected, as they were, to merciless exploitation and despairing of ever seeing justice in the present world. But both of these layers were there to justify the same thing—the existing social order. On the one hand it proved to the elite that its privileges and power (political and spiritual) came from God and were an immutable manifestation of the order established by the Creator, on the other it showed the people that their place in the order of things was defined by the need for submission and humility as the only means of salvation from original sin with which all mankind was supposedly cursed.

The Christian religion satisfied the intellectual, moral and emotional needs of medieval man. Religion functioned as a kind of encyclopaedia which gave definite meaning and order to the world (its beginning and end, structure and development) and to man (his place in the world, his destiny and his system of values). In this sense religion, or to be more precise, its theoretical element, theology, contains elements of philosophy. In the moral sphere it tried to give orientation to human relations and regulate human behaviour. Religion also claimed through eschatology, the doctrine that related to the final destinies of the world and man, to give complete answers to questions regarding the future of man and mankind. In an epoch that from the psychological point of view was highly unstable, Christianity functioned as a kind of emotional regulator that provided an outlet for social and personal emotions and created the illusion of human community. Religion acted on the masses primarily through its organisation, the Church.

Christianity was an important factor in the relative unity of medieval European culture. From the very beginning the Christian apologists and the fathers of the Church had tried hard to lay the foundations and form a system of Christian theology which included teaching about God, about the essence of revelation and about interpreting the canonical sacraments. The early apologists and particularly the patristic fathers adopted various approaches not only to individual problems, but also to theology as a whole. But for all their differ-

ences the apologists and the fathers of the Church agreed on one thing—that theology was the science of sciences. In Christianity it occupies the same position as philosophy in the Graeco-Roman *Weltanschauung*. Latin, the language of the Church and theology, became the language of medieval intellectual culture.

In the Middle Ages theology became the highest form of ideology designed for the “high-domed” elite, the educated people of the time, while for the ordinary people ideology was to act above all as “practical” cult religion. The amalgam of theology and the other levels of religious consciousness formed a single ideological and psychological complex which embraced all classes and strata of feudal society.

Medieval thought. Philosophy during the Middle Ages was not rigidly fixed and invariable throughout the whole period. The framework of the medieval *Weltanschauung*, as has already been mentioned, was formulated by Augustinus Aurelius, who united albeit not always systematically and at times with a certain amount of artistic enthusiasm, the philosophy of Western Christianity, having given it a neo-Platonic slant. The teaching of the Bishop of Hippo was supplemented by Pope Gregory the Great (540-604), who was particularly concerned to strengthen the social functions of the Church and improve its practical organization. Until the 13th century the main direction of Catholicism was Augustinism and it was on this basis that European thought was integrated.

There is also one other important factor, worth we believe consideration. The foundations of scholastic thought, which became the personification of cultural life in medieval Europe, were laid not only by the fathers of the Church, but by a thinker who did not himself accept the basic dogma of Christianity on the Holy Trinity, the Creation and Salvation. This was Boethius (circa 480-525), the last great philosopher of the 6th century, who tried to show that there was a deep inner similarity between the two greatest philosophical systems of antiquity, the Platonic and the Aristotelian. In his translations the works of the Stagirite (Aristotle) were known to the Latin-speaking Western world long before the Arab scholars began to take an interest in him in the 12th century. The Platonic and the Aristotelian lines did not coincide completely in early medieval

thought. They tended to be simplified and adapted to the dominant system of world-view guidelines and concepts. Boethius posed a series of questions which continued to concern philosophers not only in the early, but also in the developed medieval period. These were set out in the main work of the "last Roman", *The Consolation of Philosophy*, which became one of the favourite books of the time.

At the time when education and culture were making the first timid steps towards revival after several centuries of decline Johannes Scotus Erigena (circa 815-877) developed an original philosophical system which tried to understand and to a certain extent "mathematicize" the nature of being. He also made what was for the time a number of extremely bold pantheistic conclusions from his deductions. He claimed that reason took precedence over authority and thus opened the way to medieval free-thinking. The only thing that saved Erigena from persecution was the fact that none of his contemporaries could understand his teaching.

With the emergence of scholasticism at the turn into the 12th century, a philosophy which was taught in the increasing number of schools that began to spring up in Western Europe, logic and philosophy proper began to intrude strongly into theological problematics. The interpretation of religious dogma gave way to its analysis by Anselm of Canterbury, Peter of Lombardy, Peter Abelard and representatives of the Chartres school. Rationalistic free-thinking began to flourish as did its antithesis, mysticism (the St. Victor School, Bernard of Clairvaux and Bonaventura—the 13th century).

During the 13th century Western Europe became increasingly acquainted, largely through the works of the Arab scholars, with the philosophy of Aristotle which began to replace the then dominant influence of Platonism and Neoplatonism. On this basis philosophical and theological speculative thought began to develop and attempts were made to formulate all-embracing systems of philosophical and theological knowledge that amounted to unified *Summae*, or ideological and methodological consolidations of orthodox ideology, in which reason was accorded the role of systematizing the truth of revelation (Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas and Raymond Lully). The great Catholic philosopher, Thomas Aquinas (1225/26-1274), developed the line of theology which tried to create a firm philo-

sophical foundation for dogma. Aquinas' essential methodological criterion was to draw a sharp distinction between philosophical study and faith. He insisted that philosophy and theology had different methods and instruments for cognition and stressed that for this reason there was nothing more dangerous for philosophy than to make bold claims for being able to resolve the fundamental questions of theology. Theology should not have to descend to considering questions of physics and the other sciences, which were only its servants. Faith, which was based directly on the Word of God, could not, according to Aquinas, be wrong. Thus whenever there was a contradiction between the truth of faith and the truth of reason, unconditional preference should be given to the first. At first the Church was rather cautious in its treatment of Aquinas' teaching and some of his theses were criticized. But by the late 13th century Thomism was already being accepted as the official doctrine of the Catholic Church and in many respects it had continued to inspire it to the present day.

In resolute opposition to faith-based reason came the teaching of the Averroists, which originated in the University of Paris under the influence of the materialistically-minded Arab philosopher, Averroës. The ideological struggle between Thomism and Averroism was the apogee of medieval philosophical development, but it revealed also the beginning of the great split, the "decline of theology", which it subsequently became impossible to stop by any ideological means. While the magisters of the theological faculty were striving to assimilate the new philosophical trends through theological synthesis and at the same time attempting to adapt them to orthodoxy, Siger de Brabant and the teachers of the faculty of arts were demanding the free application of philosophy without the intervention of theology and dogma. What essentially they were insisting on was the separation of reason and faith, and it was on this basis that Latin Averroism developed. The philosophical conceptions of the latter included ideas on eternity, the denial of God's Providence and the theory of a unified intellect. The Averroists largely identified Aristotle with his Arab commentator, Averroës, who gave the ancient Greek philosopher a radical interpretation. As distinct from Thomas Aquinas who used Aristotelism in defence of theology, they saw philosophy as a spe-

cial field for rational thinking with its own tasks and methods of cognition.

The 14th and 15th centuries were noted, on the one hand, by increase in rationalist tendencies and a decline in scholastic philosophical speculation (from Duns Scotus to Jean de Gerson), and on the other, by the appearance of a new, Renaissance worldview and philosophical trends that were in line with it.

Medieval philosophy, like the whole culture of Western Europe in feudal times, already displayed in its early stages a tendency to universalism. Its unification and consolidation was aided by the fact that it developed on the basis of Latin Christian thought. Medieval philosophy revolved around the God-World-Man problem, which had already been formulated by the patristic fathers, but had been given its fullest philosophical exposition by Erigena. This problem was first approached under the powerful influence of Neoplatonism, both in its Christian interpretation and in an interpretation that was neither fully understood nor accepted by the Church. Hence the element of heresy contained in Erigena's work. Whereas Erigena was primarily concerned with the problem of creative nature and Anselm of Canterbury in the 11th century with the problem of God's creation as such, from the 12th century onwards the God-World-Man triad became increasingly the subject of philosophical inquiry. Interest grew in trying to explain the structure of the world and its origins and development (the Chartres school). Two Averroists, Amaury de Bène and David of Dinant were already in the 13th century identifying God and nature. In orthodox scholasticism, particularly that of Thomas Aquinas, Aristotle's cosmos was being made compatible with the Christian ideas on the Creation.

From the 12th century onwards it was the problem of Man taken from the triad which began to attract increasing attention. This was the result of a general cultural upsurge, of humanist aspirations and realization of the growing social importance of man as an individual. The 13th century saw the development of what was called the "theory of the human soul" in two interpretations—the Aristotelian-orthodox (Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas) and the non-orthodox—Averroist interpretation. But both the medieval orthodoxists and the freethinkers sought absolute knowledge which

would provide an answer to the question of the relationship between God, the World and Man. And in the final analysis both sides saw the material, visible world as a reflection of a higher, heavenly, supernatural world.

This approach meant that the debate about universals (general concepts) was central to medieval philosophy. But the specifics of medieval consciousness meant that even the most radical thinker could not deny the primacy of the spiritual over the material and of God over the World. However, even within these confines there were two opposing points of view. The realists argued that universals had existed eternally as part of the divine reason. As they united with matter, they took on concrete form. The nominalists, on the other hand, claimed that universals were deduced by the reason through cognition of individual, specific objects. An intermediate position was taken by the conceptualists (Abelard and his followers) who regarded universality as something existing in things. This seemingly abstract philosophical debate had extremely far-reaching consequences for Catholic theology and it was hardly surprising that the Church condemned nominalism as leading directly to heresy, and supported moderate realism.

The third important problem debated by the medieval philosophers was that of the relationship between faith and reason. Its roots went back to early Christian philosophy. In the 6th century Boethius insisted that faith should be strengthened by reason. Erigena stood for concord between rational cognition and revelation. But by the 12th century this problem had become extremely acute. To solve it the whole arsenal of logical methodology that had been developed with such attention to detail in medieval philosophy was mobilized. Demands were made for the freedom of reason, for the independent application of philosophy and for its development without the intervention of dogma which lay beyond the bounds of rational thinking. This resulted in a negative reaction from the Catholic Church, which began to attack philosophy and the lay sciences (Berenger de Tours, and San Pietro Damiani). The culmination of this dispute came in the 12th century with the conflict between Abelard, who insisted that thinking should not be made subject to authority, and Bernard of Clairvaux, and in the 13th century between Thomas Aquinas and the

Averroists with their theory of the "duality of truth".

For many centuries scholasticism had been dominant in the intellectual life of medieval Western Europe. But the early medieval period saw alongside it the development of mysticism that offered an intuitive-ecstatic perception and cognition, or, to be more exact, an understanding of reality. Elements of mysticism were contained in the philosophy of Erigena, who believed in the possibility of an extra-rational comprehension of the mysteries of revelation, a merging of the creator and the creation.

The philosophical mysticism of the Middle Ages frequently had Neoplatonic sources. In the 12th century it was widespread and became a powerful current within scholasticism. It was represented by philosophers of the Saint Victor school, Bernard of Clairvaux and in the 13th century by the Franciscan monk, Bonaventura, an opponent of Roger Bacon. Elements of mysticism also entered into poetry and literature. During this period the idea of direct contact between God and Man and the possibility of acquiring higher truth through vision and ecstasy became particularly attractive not only for the educated, but also to a certain extent for the mass of the population, as was reflected in the growth of the number of followers of Francisco de Asis and the appearance of various heresies of a mystical nature.

The embryonic development of empirical knowledge. It is traditional to relate the first interest in empirical knowledge in Western Europe to the 13th century. Until that time predominance had always been given to abstract, theoretical knowledge that was based on pure speculation and which frequently tended to be highly fantastical in content. Practical knowledge and philosophy were separated by an insurmountable gap. Practical knowledge found application in daily life, in trade, in manufacture, in building, but it was considered as something immeasurably low when compared with the "liberal arts" of philosophy and theology. Often this was explained by the stagnance of economic life, but to a much greater degree it was due to the characteristics of medieval thinking, which tended towards absolutization, abstract deduction and symbolic interpretation. It is not surprising that the medieval polymath, Vincent of Beauvais, wrote that natural science has as its subject the unseen causes of visible phenomena. Natural scientific methods of

cognition were virtually non-existent. Predominance was given to grammatical, rhetorical and logical approaches and symbolic interpretations. The ideal of the medieval scholars was speculative polymathy. Connection with the material world was made through cumbersome artificial theoretical abstractions, an excellent example of which is alchemy. The supersensible world, the world of miracles and fantasy, seemed more real than the real world. For medieval man the world appeared cognizable, but he cognized only that which he wanted to know and only in such a way as that world appeared to him, i.e. full of unusual phenomena and populated by strange beings like people with dogs' heads. In his understanding it was miracles that broke down the barriers between the higher supersensible world and the real world.

But life required not illusory, but practical knowledge. Technological inventions began increasingly to be made and man's knowledge of medicine, chemistry and other sciences expanded. During the crusades Europe learned much from the East. The natural scientific writings of the ancients and the Arab scholars like Averroës, Avicenna and al-Kindi became available to scholars in the West.

In the 12th and 13th centuries definite progress was made in mechanico-mathematical knowledge by such men as Leonardo da Pisa and Erasmus Veltellio. This aroused the bitter opposition of the orthodox theologians, who attacked the natural sciences as "adulterous". "Descriptive" natural science began to develop. In Oxford University the natural science treatises of the ancients and the Arabs were translated and published with commentaries. Robert Grosseteste attempted to introduce mathematical methods into natural science.

The clearest example of this new empirical trend was Roger Bacon, a representative of the Oxford school and one of the greatest scientists of the Middle Ages. Beginning as an ultra-scholastic, he eventually came to the study of nature. Refusing to accept authority, he gave decisive preference to empirical knowledge over purely speculative argumentation. He believed that where nature itself could speak there was no need for any human "instructions", by which he meant the enormous amount of educative literature that was so popular in the medieval schools.

According to Bacon, only empirical knowledge

could be considered satisfactory, although his view of experience and observation was not equal to scientific experiment. Bacon believed that there were two kinds of experience, internal and external. The internal existed for cognizing the higher truths, the external or sensory for comprehending the mysteries of nature. Bacon's researches tended mainly towards external experience and observation for the improvement of which he employed various instruments and equipment. He attached particular importance to mathematics, whose methods could be applied in all sciences. Bacon achieved substantial results in optics, physics and chemistry. He also had the reputation of being a magician and dabbler in black magic. Stories were related about him that he had made a talking bronze head (the first robot) and suggested that a bridge could be erected through the use of compressed air. Bacon himself said that there was nothing mysterious about his work. He believed it was possible to make craft for sailing that would go without oarsmen and that river and sea ships could be made to sail faster with one helmsman than if they had many people on board. Chariots could be driven without horses and made to go much faster. Men could fly by sitting in the middle of special apparatus and using a machine to move a pair of wings like a bird. A small device could be made that was capable of lifting a great weight and an apparatus that would allow man to walk safely on the bottom of the sea or a river.

Bacon's life was full of reverses and deprivations. He was persecuted by the Church and was several times imprisoned for long periods. Bacon frequently felt himself alone in his undertakings but to the end of his days remained full of cognitive optimism.

His work was continued by William of Ockham (14th century) and his followers: Nicolas de Autrecourt, Jean Buridan and Nicole Oresme, whose views provided the philosophical groundings for the development of the natural-scientific trend in thinking. Ockhamism consistently developed the idea of separating reason from faith. It had absorbed the radical traditions of the previous free-thinking—nominalist, Baconist and Averroist.

New trends. Dante. The great Italian poet, Dante Alighieri (1265-1321), is of exceptional importance when we come to reconstruct the cultural and spiritual life of the Middle Ages. His work provides a

veritable encyclopaedia of medieval thought in those aspects which are the most complete and significant for the future historical epoch. Contemporary currents of philosophical thought, the highest achievements of this thinking, the political doctrines of the time, and the developments made in the natural sciences are all melted in the crucible of poetic inspiration and combined with a deep understanding of human psychology and social relations to produce a grandiose picture of the universe, nature, society and man. Dante's genius moves fluidly, from the highest abstractions to a clear, almost three-dimensional depiction of the most specific phenomena of daily life. Refined and elevated love exists in his works side by side with earthly human passion, while abstract moralizing is found together with a depiction of human infatuation that is both convincing and at the same time heart-rending. While on the whole remaining faithful to the positions of Catholic philosophy, Dante pays tribute to the ideas of Abelard and the Averroists. He speaks with fondness of his teachers—the poets and philosophers of antiquity, whom he fully vindicates, placing them not in Hell as he does the other pagans, but in the Limbo, where they suffer no torment, but are engulfed in "painless grief". This idea for such troubled times was extremely bold.

Neither did the mystical images and motifs of "holy poverty" leave Dante indifferent. A whole gallery of prominent medieval figures, rulers of men's minds of the era, pass before the reader of the *Divina Commedia*, which has become part of the treasure-house of world culture. The work of the great Florentine poet is full of vitality, enormous poetic and social energy and the kind of critical spirit which breaks down traditional world-view framework from within. Dante's inquisitive mind penetrates the depths of the universe and the human soul and rises to the heights of the starry heavens, while his artistic genius clothes in living palpable flesh the fiery world of human passions and mercilessly condemns those guilty of cruelties to the most terrible torments, thereby assuming with an audacity unbelievable for the time the role of supreme arbiter. His fearlessness borders on heresy. But at the same time his soul is not impartial. He is affected deeply by the torments of others and suffers with them. Dante affirms the ideals of good, of hope and of humanism. In his works can be heard the call of a

coming epoch, and all the best that was achieved in his time he passes down to the future.

Education. Education and upbringing during the Middle Ages was determined by the predominance of religious ideology and the Church. From the 5th to the 7th century the last of the schools organized on the Roman model died out. A considerable amount of work was done to systematize the ancient cultural heritage and adapt it to the needs of barbarian society and the demands of the Church. Textbooks and encyclopaedias which were subsequently to become medieval "classics" were written such as: *De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* by Martianus Capella, Boethius' treatises on arithmetic, music, geometry and astronomy (the last two of which have not been preserved), the *Institutiones divinarum et humanarum litterarum* by Cassiodorus and the *Originum seu Etimologiarum Libri XX* by Isidore of Seville. Among the barbarians military education was predominant.

A new type of school, the Christian Church school, began to appear everywhere. Education took on a religious character and became dogmatized and standardized. From the 6th to the 8th century schools were chiefly found at the monasteries. Here scriptoria were set up in which religious literature and the works that had remained of the ancient authors were copied out, and libraries were formed. The centres of monasterial culture were to be found in Ireland, in Vivarium, Montecassino and Bobbio in Italy, in Tours, Corbeil and Cluny in France, in Fulda and Reichenau in Germany, in Saint Gall in Switzerland and in Canterbury, Glastonbury and Malsbury in England. In the late 8th century during the period of the Carolingian Renaissance the first attempts were made to realize the idea of a national culture for the lay as well as the clergy. The centre of education was the palace school at Aachen, which was headed by Alcuin and elementary schools were opened all over the empire.

From the 11th century onwards there began a steady increase in the number of medieval schools and the education system was generally improved. Schools were divided into monasterial, cathedral and parish schools. The growth of the towns, the emergence of the third social estate and the flourishing of the guilds meant an increasing number of private, guild and municipal lay schools that were not subject to the direct dictate of the Church. It

was here that the "wandering scholars" who came from the towns, the countryside, the lower nobility and the lower clergy received their education. They were frequently the bearers of anticlerical sentiments, which found reflection in their own clear and original Latin poetry.

Education in school was conducted in Latin—only in the 14th century did schools appear in which the education medium was the national language. The Middle Ages made no strict division of schools into primary, secondary and higher, nor was any account taken of the specifics of child education and child psychology. The schools were noted for their strict discipline with corporal punishment verging on cruelty being the norm. The classrooms had no special equipment and the teaching day lasted from morning till evening. In the best instances several pupils had to make do with one book. Primary education began with the norms of Christian morality being instilled into a child and with the learning of prayers by rote. Reading was mainly taught through the Psalter. Education was religious in content and verbal and rhetorical in form. Elementary mathematics and natural science were expounded fragmentarily, descriptively and frequently given a fantastical interpretation. Vocational training was from the 12th century onwards the province of the guilds.

At a higher level of education students received the traditional medieval course as inherited from the antique schools. There were the seven "liberal arts" divided into the lower level, or *trivium* and consisting of grammar, rhetoric and dialectics, and the *quadrivium*, consisting of arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy. Grammar was considered the "mother of all sciences", dialectics provided knowledge of formal logic, and rhetoric taught the art of correct and eloquent speech and sometimes the beginnings of law. The *quadrivium* comprised the "mathematical disciplines", music being considered the science of the numerical correlations determining harmony.

The 12th and 13th centuries saw an economic and cultural upsurge in Western Europe. The development of the towns as centres of craft and trade, the broader horizons that now lay before Europe and acquaintance with oriental culture, particularly Arabic, served as a stimulus for the education system. Cathedral schools in the large intellectual

centres of Europe gradually developed into universities so that by the 15th century these institutions of higher learning totalled some sixty throughout the continent.

The artistic ideal. In the Middle Ages aesthetics, like history, mathematics or indeed any other branch of knowledge that is so normal for modern man, was not singled out as a special discipline with its own subject matter, method and forms of expression. Aesthetical concepts and artistic ideals resided within the total culture, penetrating it and giving it that unique and original image, which was multiplied, like in a row of mirrors, in all the various images and styles that altered according to time and location and which so clearly distinguished it from the artistic culture of antiquity or the Renaissance.

The humanists of the Renaissance and the Enlighteners of the 18th century proclaimed other aesthetic ideals. They spoke of the "ugliness" and "barbarity" of medieval architecture and art, their distortion of "natural beauty" and their primitivism and "crudity" of expression. The Romantics of the 19th century, on the other hand, admired the "mystery of the gloomy Gothic".

The art and artistic language of the Middle Ages were varied and deep. And this variety was not immediately accepted by the rationally-minded of successive centuries. It took the work of many generations of scholars to show the high value and uniqueness of medieval culture, which was so different from the ancient and the modern European, but which was at the same time a necessary and logical stage in the development of human civilization. Its "mysterious language" is, however, both understandable and exciting to our contemporaries.

The medieval period created its own forms of artistic expression adequate to the worldview of the era. Art was the means for reflecting the higher, "invisible beauty" that existed beyond the bounds of earthly existence in the supernatural world. Like philosophy, art was a means of understanding the absolute, the divine truth. Hence its symbolism and allegorism. The enormous diversity of the world around could be captured with the aid of symbolic representation and interpretation, and anything from a cooking pot to the Holy Trinity (as in the work of the 9th century Bishop of Mainz, Rabanus Maurus) could serve as its subject. Stories from the Old Testament were treated as precursors to events

in the New Testament, while fragments of ancient mythology were looked upon as religious allegories. Thus the *Acta Romana*, which was popular light reading in the 12th century, interpreted the Trojan War in the following way: Paris signified the Devil; Helen was the soul, or the human race ensnared by the Devil; Troy was Hell; Ulysses was Christ and Achilles the Holy Ghost; the ship laden with goods was the Blessed Virgin Mary, adorned with virtue; and Achilles' arms were the cross, the keys, the spear and the crown.

In the 12th and 13th centuries medieval symbolism reached its apogee. Both in orthodox scholasticism and in art, polysemantism implied a wide variety of interpretation, each of which added to rather than detracted from the other. But it originated not only in the Christian religion. The roots of symbolism went back into the consciousness of the barbaric tribes, which from time immemorial had leaned towards allegory and explanation through intricate analogy, which stemmed not from a subject's content, but from its form. An obvious example of this are the ancient Scandinavian *kennings*, or circumlocutory riddles. The continuation of this tradition is to be found in an extremely curious work by that prominent figure of the Carolingian Renaissance, Alcuin, which has been given so many different interpretations in literary history. Here he conducts a dialogue with his pupil after the following fashion:

"What is a letter?"—"The guardian of history".

"What is man?"—"The slave of death. A passing traveller. A guest in one's home," and so on.

From this kind of approach the most fantastic interpretations of etymology arose—the origins of words, depictions and descriptions of the mythological animals and plants which cover medieval manuscripts and decorate the capitals of the cathedrals.

Symbolism and allegorism were not only the heritage of the intellectual upper crust, who excelled in the formation of abstract constructions. They were part of the whole medieval concept of the world, both clerical and lay, and they were reflected in both chivalrous literature and urban art.

Symbolism resulted in an understanding of the art form which was qualitatively different as com-

pared to that of the ancient world. Since for medieval man the ideal unquestionably predominated over the material, the corporeal, the changeable and the transitory had no artistic and aesthetic value. That which was perceived by the senses was sacrificed to that which was perceived by the mind with the result that artistic technique changed. It did not require to imitate nature, on the contrary, it moved away towards maximum generalization so that representation primarily became a symbol for what was hidden. The canonical rules and the traditional techniques and methods were of more importance than individual creativity, for they followed the laws of "eternal beauty". It was not that the medieval artist did not know anatomy and the laws of perspective, he rejected them in principle. They were not part of the canons of symbolic representation that strove for universalism in art.

From its very beginning medieval culture tended to adopt a total, encyclopaedic approach to the world. In philosophy, science and literature this was expressed in the writing of all-embracing *Summae* and *Specula*. Similarly, the medieval churches were stone "encyclopaedias" of universal knowledge, "bibles" for the ordinary people. The craftsmen who built them tried to depict the Universe in all its variety and complete harmonious unity, to condense all the knowledge then known in artistic imagery. Thus as a whole the Church rose up as a symbol of the Universe striving for a higher ideal, but its outside and inside were literally covered with an enormous variety of sculptures and paintings. The innumerable creatures, for example, that were represented were so lifelike that, according to contemporaries, they seemed to be still at large in the forests and on the roads, only somehow frozen. At times on the outside of the cathedrals the figures of Grammar, Arithmetic, Music and Philosophy were depicted, personifying the subjects learned in the medieval schools. And, of course, every cathedral had an abundance of "stone illustrations" of the Bible. Everything that concerned medieval man was one way or another represented there. And for many these "encyclopaedias in stone" were the main source of knowledge.

The total image of the world could at the time only be presented as internally hierarchical. Such a presentation had the sanction of Christianity and was deemed natural. The highest place in the hier-

rarchy of being was occupied by God, followed by the angels and the saints, etc. Man was the link between the worlds of Heaven and Earth. He was the consummation of Creation on Earth and everything there should serve him. This hierarchical principle did much to determine the character of medieval art and architecture and the correlation of their various structural and compositional elements.

It took, however, many centuries for Western Europe to develop this crystallized artistic language and original imagery. The few examples still remaining that date back to the first centuries of the medieval period bear the stamp of fitful, incomplete strivings. The stone churches were crude imitations of late Roman basilicas. In applied art the barbaric "bestial" style continued to predominate, in which representations of mythical animals were woven into intricate patterns. From decorations this style developed into miniature paintings to become the most original of the works of early medieval art (cf. the Aachen Testament and the Gospel of Ebo).

In the 10th century the Romanesque style was formed and it predominated for the next two centuries, being most clearly evident in France and Germany. The Romanesque stone churches with their vaulted ceilings were simple and strict. Their walls were strong and powerful being essentially church-fortresses. It is not surprising that this period saw the beginning of the feudal castles. At first sight the Romance cathedral is crude and squat in appearance and only gradually are the noble simplicity and harmony of the design, that were intended to show the unity and harmony of the world, revealed. Its portals symbolized the Gates of Heaven with God Triumphant, the Supreme Arbiter, soaring above them. But at the same time it is a compassionate God, who defends the sufferers.

The Romance cathedrals were richly decorated with sculpture creating a multitude of impressive images. Through the symbolism of sculptural representation the changeable, strained faces of real medieval people appeared clearly to show that this art could not be reduced to the symbolic or the transcendental alone. For all their naivety and "clumsiness" they were full of life. They embodied not only ideal images, but the real cares, aspirations and tastes of the people of the time. This becomes particularly clear when comparing Romanesque art with Byzantine. Though both had a certain similarity in

their world outlooks and in their basic creative principles, we can see, for example, in the Romanesque portraits of the saints with their unprepossessing squat figures and their simple expressive faces a form of art that is far from any kind of canon. Byzantine art, on the other hand, which preferred mosaics and icon painting to sculpture, created more refined spiritual images and retained a greater distance between artistic representation and reality. Romanesque art was much less subject to the canons and therefore less inflexible.

The Romance temple was not only a "Bible in stone", but also a book of popular fantasy. It is not surprising that Bernard de Clairvaux expressed his amazement on looking at the church sculptures. "Why," he asked, "in the monasteries before the very eyes of the brothers are all these ridiculous monstrosities, all these hideous representations and representations of the hideous? Why these dirty monkeys? Why these wild lions? Why these monstrous centaurs? Why these half-men? Why these spotted tigers? Why wars and bloody duels? Here there are several bodies with one hand and there several heads with one body. Here there is a four-legged animal with the tail of a snake and there a fish with the head of a four-legged animal. Here there is an animal with the front half a horse and the back half a goat, and there is a horned beast with its back in the form of a horse. So great and so astounding is the variety of these figures that people prefer to look at the marble than to read books and spend the whole day gazing at them in amazement instead of thinking about the Word of God and learning."

But the creators of medieval art which was never used to illustrate dogmatic and scholastic subtleties were also affected by worldly concerns as well as fantastic ideas. The artistic ideal was clothed in flesh and blood, "brought down to earth", as it were. The artists of the Middle Ages were simple and in most cases illiterate folk, who more often than not came from the lower social strata. And although the orders came from the Church, the art was created by the artist, who put into it not only an abstract idea, but his own soul, his joy, his grief and his love of beauty. The artists put religious feeling into their works, but this was not the spirituality of the bookish priests, but a popular religious awe which interpreted orthodox teaching in its own highly individual way and frequently contained shades of heresy.

A zeal that was as much earthly as it was inspired by Heaven rings out in their works.

In this context the evolution of the subjects depicted and the character of the representation is of some significance. From the 10th to the early 12th century predominance was given to the image of Christ in His Glory, the conqueror of death, the defender, the judge. The favourite theme was the Day of Judgement, which was represented as the apotheosis of justice. In early Gothic art the image of the suffering Christ and the Virgin Mary began to predominate, but from the 12th century onwards worship of the latter began to overshadow the worship of the former.

The birth of Gothic marked a new stage in the development of medieval art. As distinct from the Romance cathedral with its precise plan and visible forms, the Gothic cathedral was immense and frequently asymmetrical. Each of its portals had a character of its own. The cathedral soared upwards. Its walls were light, open and lattice-like so as to make room for the huge stained-glass windows. Inside the cathedral was spacious and magnificently decorated.

The cathedrals were built on the orders of the city communes. They symbolized not only the power of the Church, but also the strength and freedom of the towns. Their building was a manifestation of the artistic genius of the people. At times a portal or a facade of the cathedral would contain some symbolism that was actually alien or even hostile to the Church. Thus the builders of the Cathedral in Lan-nes (France), which had bravely struggled for its liberty, immortalized on the towers bullocks for the fact that they had worked hard to help build the cathedral. Then again there was the well-known medieval legend about a juggler who had come to the cathedral to pray to the Virgin Mother. All his life he had given people pleasure by his tricks, his dancing and his acrobatics. Since he knew no prayers he decided to serve the Madonna in the same way as he had always served the people, by offering her his art. Before her figure in the cathedral he went rigorously through his whole repertoire. And the Madonna graciously accepted his simple but sincere gift. In this manner the medieval builders, artists and engravers "twined the crown for the Most High out of living beings" believing that He cannot but be moved by what is happening to

His creatures. That is why the Gothic cathedrals are truly encyclopaedias in stone and not in the abstract but in most real, common sense of the word.

Each Gothic cathedral has its own theme. Lannes Cathedral tells of the miracle of creation and the joy of understanding. Chartres Cathedral presents an inspiring, symbolic picture of Heaven and Earth and is thus a "model of the Universe". Rheims Cathedral is an anthem of French national history. But for all the similarity in its artistic ideal, Gothic architecture has distinct features in the various countries and parts of Europe. German Gothic could hardly be confused with Spanish, nor English with French or Dutch. The Gothic style also reached as far as Czechia and Poland and the Scandinavian countries.

Much of the art on the walls of the Gothic cathedrals represents scenes from the life of the people, from plays and not infrequently from satires directed against the monks and priests. Thus on the capital of Parma Cathedral an ass in a monk's attire is preaching a sermon to a pack of wolves. The inscription underneath says: "Monks (in reality wolves) interpreting Holy Scripture". Similar subjects are also depicted on the capitals of Strasbourg Cathedral. A merchant that was selling drawings of them in the 17th century was taken to court and made responsible for their content. Frequently the churches contained frivolous scenes that were blatantly alien to the asceticism preached by the Church. As in the Romanesque buildings beasts, birds, plants, household utensils and tools abound. The artists continually treated the theme of labour, since God decided that man should work. Peasants, craftsmen, blacksmiths, carpenters, builders and potters are all represented at their labours. Jugglers, dancers and musicians are also depicted.

Gothic sculpture makes an enormously powerful impression. The extreme emotional stress as reflected on the faces and in the figures of the sculptures gives the impression that they are striving to free themselves from the flesh so as to grasp the greatest sacraments of being. Human sufferings and the cleaning and elevation through them are the hidden nerve-spring of Gothic art. This art form knows no respite, no conciliation. It is ecstatic, confused and full of spiritual passion. The Gothic artists reach their tragic incandescence in depicting the sufferings of Christ on the Cross. On the whole they tend

to be repelled by healthy, well-cared flesh, which is understandable since they were reflecting a life that was hard, dramatic and full of poverty and suffering, a life in which man was faced hourly by unseen dangers. And for the representation of this they developed a uniquely distinctive imagery.

The artists tried to show the higher spiritual beauty which lit up the emaciated bodies and exhausted faces. The beauty of Gothic sculpture is the triumph of the spirit, the triumph of the will over the flesh. But they were also able to depict warm human feelings. The figures of Marie and Elizabeth in Rheims Cathedral and Uta and her sister in Nuremberg Cathedral are remarkable for the soft lyricism with which they were sculptured.

In Gothic art sculpture predominated over painting, which is represented mainly by murals along the sides of the chancel. The medieval manuscripts, however, with their colourful elegant miniatures present a real gallery of tiny paintings which show life at the time in all its wide variety.

The art of the Middle Ages was created by the hands of the craftsmen, the peasants and the townsmen. Their names have been lost to us, but they did their work honourably, with inspiration and with love for the roughness of the stone, the brightness of the glass, the heaviness of the metal, the very corporeality of the matter they dealt with. But they were also great artists, raising man by their collective labours towards God and paving the way for the upward flight of the Renaissance.

The estate-corporative character of medieval culture. The estate-corporative structure of society was of decisive importance for the development of medieval culture. Aesthetic ideals and image stereotypes for all the fundamental similarity of their basis were developed differently according to the different corporations and social estate amalgamations, and their transference into the sphere of other social estate associations was due to their general reinterpretation and artistic re-working. Only stereotyped forms of artistic expression that conformed to the cultural and ideological requirements of individual social estate corporations could find a place in the system of cultural values of feudal society, which had no respect for individuality or original talent, but only for conformity to a definite stereotype. Artistic perfection was not seen in originality, but in the precise and clear reproduction of

the ideological and ethical principles of the corporation. Hence the frequent anonymity of medieval works of art and at the same time the authoritarianism of cultural tradition which insisted not on the quest for original forms and individual methods, but on the greatest degree of typification and the maximum approximation to the archetype that was accepted in the given social milieu. The works of the medieval artist were designed not primarily for individual appreciation, but for the edification of the corporation and the public. The medieval writers and artists had a definite place in their own social groups, whose ideas and way of life they shared. Life in the developed medieval period being outwardly mobile, an epic poet, troubadour or wandering scholar might travel the length and breadth of Europe, but they would always move in that was essentially the same social milieu and their art would remain within the confines of a definite social framework. They would express a stereotyped form of social self-consciousness and employ the appropriate means for its artistic embodiment. This led to the cultural patterns of various social groups, particularly during the period of classical feudalism in Western Europe, becoming isolated and exclusive and resulted in the uniqueness of their mutual interaction.

Chivalry. The knights, which included feudal lords of all ranks from the king and the dukes to the impoverished wandering knights, who from the 12th century onwards became increasingly more common, were a privileged social caste. They considered themselves the "flower of the nation" and the upper crust of society.

Their ideology was, on the one hand, rooted in the depths of the consciousness of the barbaric peoples with their cult of a leader, personal loyalty and military glory and, on the other, in the Christian concept of service, which was interpreted at first as being purely religious, but what subsequently acquired a wider meaning to include lay relationships, and particularly service to a lady.

Receiving a knighthood was one of the most important events in the life of a feudal lord. It was a solemn ritual, a symbolic ceremony which made a youth a full and equal member of the military-aristocratic stratum. Having girded his sword—the highest symbol of a knight's honour—he payed homage, i. e. acknowledged his loyalty to his lord

with an oath which was sealed with a handshake and a kiss.

Loyalty to his lord was the nucleus of the knight's ethos. Perfidy or betrayal were the very worst of sins and entailed exclusion from the body of knights. The knights' profession was war, but gradually they began to look upon themselves as champions of justice and defenders of the weak and the aggrieved. This in practice, of course, was an unattainable ideal, for justice was given a highly distinctive interpretation by the knights and was extended to include an extremely narrow circle of society that was defined by purely class characteristics. It is sufficient in this context to remember the words of the troubadour, Bertrand de Born, whom it pleased to "see the people hungry, ill-clad, suffering and cold".

The knights' code of honour demanded a great deal of other qualities, for in the words of Raymond Lully, a knight was a man who "acted honourably and who led a noble life". In the Norwegian version of *Tristan and Isolde* we are told that Tristan was the "ideal knight". He was first and foremost a valiant warrior, who magnificently wielded every type of weapon. He was a fine hunter and knew the habits of the beasts and the fowl. He was versed in herbal law. Tristan had had a fine education in the seven arts and spoke many languages. He had studied seven types of music and was famed as a musician. He was also a poet, a fine chess player and his manners were impeccable. He was distinguished for his loyalty in friendship and in love, for his magnanimity towards his enemies and for his generosity. His daring at times reached the point of recklessness. The thought of personal advantage was something entirely alien to Tristan. He lived his life in a world of powerful emotions. He openly expressed his feelings and his inner world was full of great passion. Tristan, and this was particularly important, was always in a state of permanent movement. Idleness was completely against his nature. The fact that he was never satisfied with himself resulted in an insuperable need to accomplish more and more feats. His thirst for adventure was perhaps even greater than his passion for Isolde.

The knights in real life, of course, were as a rule far from matching up to this ideal. Many had nothing but brute physical strength and a knowledge of warfare and no formal education at all. Most were ignorant, illiterate and rude. But the high expecta-

tions of what a knight was supposed to be were formulated into a code of honour which in its ideal united the knights as a body. The finest characteristics of the knights' ethos found their way into world culture and affected the ethical values of subsequent epochs. And in many ways they continue to remain relevant today.

In the culture of chivalry external appearances were of extreme importance. For a knight much of his life had to be consciously displayed. Bravery, generosity and nobility were worth nothing if no one knew about them. A knight had to continuously strive for first place, for glory. His feats and his love had to be known "throughout the whole of Christendom". Hence the external splendour of chivalrous culture and its special attention to ceremony, accoutrements, the symbolism of colour and objects and etiquette. The tournaments which imitated real warfare and whose origins went back to pre-feudal times, to pagan, barbaric antiquity, were important events in the life of the knights. They became particularly magnificent affairs in the 13th and 14th centuries when they were attended by knights from all over Europe. It was the knights also that gave rise to European heraldry.

The Middle Ages had a strong sense of history. And this history was for the most part stored in the heroic epic, which acted as a collective memory for the people, a standard against which to judge their lives and a means for ideological and aesthetic self-affirmation. It retained in concentrated form the most important aspects of their spiritual and cultural life, their ideals, their aesthetic values and their poetry. The roots of the epic in Europe went deep into the Dark Ages, as can be seen by the subject-matter of most epic works which were based on events that occurred during the period of the great migrations.

The developed medieval epic was national and patriotic in character. It reflected not only the values that are common to all peoples, but also those that specifically belonged to the period of feudal chivalry. It idealized the ancient heroes in the spirit of chivalrous-Christian ideology and used the theme of fighting for the "true faith" to encourage the idea of defending the motherland.

Epic works as a rule were structurally integral and universal. Each was thought up and composed as the embodiment of a specific picture of the world

that embraced a multitude of different aspects of the heroes' lives. Hence the natural combination of historical reality and fantasy, high idealization and ordinary details from everyday life, heroic deeds and worldly wisdom, tragic and comic. The epic contained the perception, attitudes, cultural experience and ethics of many generations. In one form or another the epics were undoubtedly known to every member of medieval society, a real national heritage.

Two currents can be distinguished in the West European epic—the historical (heroic legends with a real historical basis) and the mythological, which is closer to folklore and fairy tales, but includes many realistic elements.

The Anglo-Saxon epic *Beowulf* was written in approximately 1000 A.D. It tells the story of a young warrior from the Gætas who performs heroic feats killing monsters and eventually dies in a fight with a dragon. These fantastical adventures take place against a real historical background that shows the development of feudalism among the peoples of Northern Europe. It is one of the finest examples of epic fantasy.

Among the best known examples of this genre in world literature are the Icelandic sagas, which tell of the ancient history of that small but heroic nation. The *Edda* of Snorri Sturluson, the stories of gods and heroes, the *Song of Roland* from the tales of French kings, the *Nibelungenlied* from Germany and the *Song of the Cid* from Spain are the best known other examples of the European epic. The *Song of Roland* and the *Song of the Cid* are based on historical events. The first tells of the battle between the French and the Muslims at Roncevaux in 778; the second relates one of the stages of the reconquest of Spain, when the Spaniards fought the Arab invaders. In both these works patriotic motifs are very strong, which makes it possible to draw definite analogies between them and the Russian epic work, *The Lay of Igor's Host*. The patriotism of the idealized heroes is what stands out most.

A real military and political event acquires in the epics the scale of a universal struggle and through such hyperbole comes the affirmation of ideals which at time transcend the framework of their epoch and become human values for all time.

The German heroic epic, the *Nibelungenlied* is much more mythologized. Here there are also he-

heroes who have historical prototypes: Etzel (Attila), Dietrich von Bern (Theodoric the Great), Gunther, the King of Burgundy, queen Brunhild and others. But the depiction of events in the *Nibelungenlied* is done from close up, while its main hero is poeticised history itself.

The medieval heroic epic was a definite type of historical writing that conveyed a ritual and symbolic interpretation of reality. This aspect characterized the epics of both East and West, and in this we can see a certain typological similarity among medieval cultures in different parts of the world.

Chivalrous literature was not only a means for expressing the consciousness and ideals of the knights, but also played an active role in forming them. And the feedback was so strong that the medieval chroniclers, when describing a battle or the feats of real people, wrote in the style of the chivalrous romances, which, originating in the mid-12th century, became for several decades the main form of lay culture. They were written in the national languages and their action developed as a chain of adventures for the heroes. One of the main sources for the West European chivalrous (courtly) romances was the Celtic legend of King Arthur and the Company of the Round Table. From this developed the beautiful story of love and death, Tristan and Isolde, which has forever remained part of the treasure-house of human culture.

The writers of the medieval chivalrous romances—the French 12th century poets, Tome and Chrétien de Troyes; the Germans, Wolfram von Eschenbach and Gottfried von Strassburg; the English, Thomas Malory; and the Spanish Cervantes who wrote the last epic about the Knight of the Rueful Countenance, lead their heroes through a chain of feats and unbelievable adventures and reveal the difficult and at times hopeless quest for a balance between society and the individual, still in the process of his historical formation. They gradually move from describing the deeds of the hero to a revelation of his inner world and to the ultimate statement that the way to self-realization lies not only through the heroic overcoming of external obstacles, but through the overcoming of one's self. At the same time the chivalrous romance has a largely symbolic character. It is orientated upon archetypal images and relations and from this comes its

traditional character, its speculativeness and at times apparent rigidity of its poetic structure.

The chivalrous romance with its raging elements of fairy-tale adventure was, for all the attempts to christianize it, essentially a lay genre. It reflected the newly developing relations between man and the world around him and the increasing individualist trends. This was expressed with particular clarity in the new concept of love, which was the centre and driving force of every chivalrous romance.

In 12th century European feudal society the position of women, in aristocratic circles at any rate, was fairly free. At times they played a prominent social role and had fairly broad rights, not merely with regard to the law and to property, but also with regard to their emotions. It was during this period that the cult of the lady began. It was an essential element in courteous culture, which attached special significance to love and emotion for the fact that they elevated a man, encouraged the best in him and inspired him to feats of prowess. This love, which was earthly and passionate, but at the same time poetic, threw down a direct challenge to the asceticism of the Church. It inspired the writers of the chivalrous romances and the troubadours, knight-poets who first appeared in Provence in the late 11th century. In the 12th century poetry did indeed become the "sovereign" of European literature. From Provence enthusiasm for poetry spread to other countries. In Northern France the *trouvères* appeared and in Germany the *Minnesingers*. Courtly poetry flourished on the Pyrenean peninsula.

Serving the loved one became a kind of religion among the higher circles. And the coincidence seems not accidental that it was precisely at this time in medieval Christianity that the cult of the Virgin Mary came into prominence. The Madonna ruled the heavens and the hearts of the faithful in the same way as the lady ruled the heart of the love-smitten poet.

By the end of the medieval period this love became "impracticable". The lady was taken down from her pedestal and from a goddess she was transformed in literature into a frivolous deceiver or a nagging wife. This would seem to be the moral condemnation of chivalry, which attached itself to the purely external manifestations of etiquette. The knight's honour yielded to personal advantage and

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chivalry became more the subject of ridicule and the chivalrous romance was parodied.

Mass performances in the Middle Ages. The culture of any historical epoch is founded on the ideas, feelings and creative powers of the working masses. In the first place language, without which there would be no culture, is the fruit of many generations of creativity. And language is the creation of the people. Popular psychology, imagery, the stereotypes of behaviour and perception are the breeding ground of culture, the things which give it flesh and blood.

The lower levels of society are distinctly represented in the "high" literature and art of the Middle Ages. Their latent presence is also felt in the whole system of intellectual life, whose movement and changes were dictated not only by internal laws but by deep currents and at times the explicitly expressed needs that were just beginning to be understood in the lower depths of medieval society. These "lower depths" were particularly well represented in urban culture, not just as objects of amusement and comedy, but as part of a fuller picture of the world that would show all aspects of human life.

Each historical epoch has its own attitude and its own ideas on nature, time, space, order of things and human relationships. But these ideas do not remain unchangeable throughout the whole epoch. They have their distinctions according to the different classes and social groups, but at the same time they are typical indicators of precisely that period of historical time. It is not enough to say that medieval man proceeded from the "picture of the world" produced by Christianity. It is quite obvious that the ideas of a religious believer today and those of his counterpart in the Middle Ages, for all their similarity of basic Christian principles, are quite different. Christianity lay at the basis of the attitude and ideas of the people but did not account for them completely.

The consciousness of the epoch in its elite and lower forms derived from belief in the dualism of the world. Earthly existence was seen as a reflection of existence on a higher, heavenly plane, containing, on the one hand, elements of the latter's harmony and beauty but, on the other, representing as "inferior" version of that world. The conciliation or opposition of the two worlds was a problem that troubled the medieval mind at all levels. The uni-

versalism, symbolism and allegorism, which were so much a part of medieval consciousness and culture, went back to this dualism.

The medieval mind was inclined more towards synthesis than analysis. Its ideal was totality, not innumerable variety. Although the world seemed to consist of the familiar, which was close at hand, and the "alien", which was far off and hostile, both these parts were merged into an indissoluble whole and one could not exist without the other.

The peasant often looked at the earth as his own continuation. It is not accidental that in the medieval documents the earth is measured through the medium of man—the number of steps taken to cover a distance, or the amount of time required to till the soil. Medieval man did not so much master the world as appropriate it and make it his through hard struggle with nature. The feeling of not being alienated was an important characteristic of the medieval mind.

Medieval literature and art had no interest in the specific detailed representation of space. Fantasy predominated over observation and they found no contradiction in this. For in the unity of Heaven and Earth—and here only the former was considered real and true—the specifics of the latter could be neglected, for they only complicated the matter of understanding the totality, which was a "closed system with sacred centres and a lay periphery".

The gigantic world created by God—the cosmos—included a "lesser cosmos" (the microcosm) which was man. The microcosm was thought of not only as the "crown of creation", but also as an integral, complete world that contained within it the same things as the macrocosm. This comes out clearly in schematic representations of the time where the macrocosm is portrayed as a closed circle of being that moves according to divine wisdom and contains within it its own animated embodiment—man. In the medieval mind nature became like man and man like the cosmos.

The medieval idea of time was quite different from our own. To begin with, in the routine, slowly moving civilization of the Middle Ages, concepts of time were far more indistinct and indefinite. Time for the ordinary man followed a definite pattern—morning-afternoon-evening-night and winter-spring-summer-autumn. And their experience of

time was different. Christianity made it something sacred, interrupting the circle of time and making it linear so that time moved from the Creation to the First Coming and from it to the Day of Judgement and the completion of earthly existence. In his work *De civitate Dei* Augustine presents a keenly historical experience of time as a strong current of being moving towards an ultimate goal. Through literary tradition, through religious worship and through the Church sermons this experience penetrated the mass consciousness which formed peculiar ideas about the extent of earthly life, death, the Day of Judgement and the posthumous, now extratemporal destiny of man. It is also interesting that time was thought of in anthropomorphic terms. The history of mankind had the same ages as man himself, viz. babyhood, childhood, adolescence, youth, maturity and old age.

Medieval man's attitude to age was also quite different from that of modern man. Demographically speaking, medieval society was young. Life expectation on average was not great. A man over forty was already considered old. The Middle Ages paid no special attention to childhood and showed no deep emotional relations towards children as is the case in our own times. On the one hand, this was because of the high birth-rate and the enormous infant mortality. A dead child in a family would soon be replaced by another which resulted in a certain impersonal attitude towards children. On the other hand, there was the fact that childhood was frequently looked upon as a socially negative time, a time when a person was still immature and had no rights. It is not accidental that for a long time the medieval period knew no representations of children—they were always given the faces of adults.

The attitude to youth was very clear and emotional. It was thought of as a time of flourishing, of games and revelry. It was widely held as the time at which the "vital magic force" was most felt. Youthful revelry was accepted in medieval society, whose moral standards on the whole tended towards sobriety, chastity and stability. Entry into "adult" life

required a youth to renounce these frivolities, for the energy of youth had to be channeled down the traditional social ducts and not allowed to splash over the sides.

The medieval period had its own views on such cardinal aspects of human social life as power, law, work, wealth and poverty.

In relations between people as much importance was attached to the form as the content. Hence the scrupulous observance of tradition and ritual. Punctilious etiquette came first from medieval culture.

In mass performances with all their emphasis on religion much attention was given to witchcraft and black magic. However, from the 11th to the 13th century, the greatest time of religious fervour, sorcery moved down to the lower layers of the populace inspired by messianism and the ecstatic expectation that the Kingdom of God, promised in the New Testament, was at hand. It was during the decline of medieval culture proper, not until the 15th and 16th centuries, that magic, demonology and witchcraft can be said to have come into their own.

For a long time medieval culture in Western Europe was looked upon as purely religious without any positive historical importance for the development of mankind. Today we see that culture in many more of its aspects. The extreme asceticism and the life-asserting attitude of the people, the mystical ecstasy and the logical rationalism, the striving for the absolute and the passionate love of the concrete, tangible side of life strangely, yet somehow organically, combine in this culture according to aesthetic laws that were different both from those of antiquity and those of modern times, yet no less important inasmuch as they affirmed the attitudes and values of the Middle Ages, a natural and original stage in the development of human civilization. For all its variety medieval culture forms an harmonious ensemble, an ideological, spiritual and artistic integrity, which was determined by the unity of the historical reality which fed it.

Chapter II

The Byzantine Empire (4th-15th Century)

The emergence of the Byzantine Empire. The separation of the Roman Empire into its East and West halves at the end of the 4th century resulted in the formation of Byzantium as an independent state. The original city of Byzantium was founded as an ancient Megarian colony in the 7th century B. C. on the banks of the Bosphorus. Here between 324 and 330 A. D. the Emperor Constantine the Great built the new capital for his empire—Constantinople. The name Byzantium arose later, for the Byzantines themselves referred to themselves by the Greek word “Rhomaiki” and to their empire as “Romaic”. The Byzantine emperors were officially entitled emperors of the Romans and their capital was for a long time known as New Rome.

Byzantium was no exception to the general laws governing the development of human society. Throughout its thousand-year history, which appears so long, and yet is in fact so short within the total span of human history, it passed through the same basic stages of social progress as did many other countries in the medieval world. It saw the collapse of the slave-owning society and the birth, flowering and decline of the feudal system. But in Byzantium social development took on specific forms and had its own unique colouring. These unique features of its social system and culture are what distinguished it from the neighbouring states of Europe and Asia.

The geographical position of Byzantium, whose dominions stretched over two continents—Europe and Asia—and whose power at certain periods of its history extended to include a third—Africa—made its empire, as it were, the barrier between East and West. It was the historical fate of

Byzantium to be permanently split between East and West and permanently affected by the interaction between Asiatic and European influences with each predominating at different times. The mixture of Graeco-Roman and Eastern traditions stamped the life, the government, the religion, the philosophy, the culture and the art of Byzantine society. But Byzantium followed its own historical path which differed considerably from that of East or West.

From the 4th to the mid-7th century Byzantium comprised the whole eastern half of the Roman Empire. This included the Balkans, Asia Minor, the Aegean Islands, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Cyrenaica, Crete, Cyprus, part of Mesopotamia and Armenia, individual areas of Arabia and some parts of the Crimea (Kherson) and the Caucasus. In the 5th century Illyria and Dalmatia in the West joined Byzantium. The total area of the empire was in excess of 750,000 square kilometres.

Most of the empire consisted of areas with a highly developed agriculture. Grain crops (wheat and barley) were extensively cultivated as were olives and grapes and from the 6th century, silk. In the early period the granary of the empire were Egypt and Thrace. On the plains and high meadows of Asia Minor and the Balkans stock-farming was well developed.

Byzantium was rich in natural resources. The coastal waters abounded in fish. Many regions had excellent building materials like wood, stone and marble. There were considerable mineral deposits with gold, silver, iron and copper being mined in the Balkans and Asia Minor. Only lead and a certain amount of silver had to be imported from Brit-

ain and Spain. Egypt provided the most important writing material—papyrus.

The ethnic composition of the Byzantine Empire was extremely varied. Predominant were the Greeks and the Hellenized nationalities like the Copts in Egypt, the Syrians, Armenians and Jews in Syria and Palestine, the Thracians and Illyrians in the Balkans and the native tribes in Asia Minor. Greek became the most common language and the Greeks the dominant race. The Latin population of Western Byzantium was comparatively small. The Hellenization of the local populations was carried out with varying degrees of intensity in different parts. Many peoples, particularly in the eastern provinces, maintained their own language, culture and customs. But gradually an ethnic Greek nucleus was formed in Byzantium.

The role of Byzantium and its political prestige naturally changed during the course of the empire's thousand-year history. The Byzantine state went through periods of rise and fall, flourishing and decline. Its history can be divided clearly into three periods according to its internal development and the role which the state played in medieval international life.

The three periods of Byzantine history. The first period lasted three and a half centuries—from the 4th to the mid-7th. During this period Byzantium, the direct heir to the Roman Empire, still had the aureole of a world power. It was during this period that the social, political and economic system of late antiquity which was based on slavery and whose main support was the polis began to die out. The collapse of the late Graeco-Roman polis marked the new feudal period off from the old slave-owning society just as much as did the invasions of the Arabs, the Slavs and the Langobardi.

The 7th century saw enormous territorial and ethnic changes in Byzantium. Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Cyrenaica were conquered by the Arabs. The lands from the Danube to the Aegean were occupied by Slavs and Protobulgarians, and it was here that the first independent Slavic states were formed. Armenia and Lazika, the main Byzantine dominions in the Transcaucasia, became independent. Parts of Italy that were nominally under Byzantine rule became more and more isolated. By the late 7th century the Byzantine rulers had less than a third of the lands that had once formed

the enormous empire of Justinian (527-565). But Byzantium weathered the storms of the 7th century and came through more ethnically united than ever. It was now basically centred on Greece, part of the Balkans, the Aegean Islands, part of Italy and Asia Minor and strongholds in the Crimea and on the southern coast of the Black Sea.

The 7th century also brought cardinal changes in the social system of the empire. The decline of the polis and the temporary weakening of state power brought the centre of social life to the village and its cultural centre to the monastery. The Middle Ages had begun.

The second period of Byzantine history began in the mid-7th century and lasted till the early 13th century. During this period Byzantium became almost entirely a Greek state. Despite its territorial losses it remained one of the most powerful states in the Mediterranean. Social and economic relations during this period were characterized by the predominance of the village. Dominant among the social processes was the maturing of patrimonial forms of peasant exploitation and the formation of feudal institutions.

The beginning of the third and last period in the history of Byzantium coincided with the Latin conquest and the fragmentation of the empire into separate states. The temporary and incomplete reunification of the Greek lands after the fifty-year wars with the Latins (1261) did not during the reign of the Palaeologi dynasty lead to a renaissance of the empire's former might. Deserted by her allies and torn apart by internal strife, Byzantium was now doomed to a hopeless unequal struggle with the powerful Osman Empire, a struggle which ended tragically in the mid-15th century. In 1453 Constantinople fell to the Osman Turks and subsequently the whole Byzantine Empire was conquered. This later period (13th to the mid-15th century) was characterized by a decay in the feudal system. The tender shoots of pre-capitalist relations which had pushed through here and there, however, died as a result of the triumph of feudal reaction, the predominance of the Italian economy and the Osman military threat.

The specific characteristics of Byzantine social development. The specific characteristics of Byzantine social development were defined in the early period of the empire's existence. Its economic

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vitality allowed Byzantium not only to survive the fires of the barbarian invasions and retain its independence, but also to go over to the offensive against the barbarian world.

Byzantium did not suffer complete conquest by the barbarians or the destruction of its state. Although numerous nations—the Slavs, the Armenians, the Arabs and other tribes—had settled on its lands changing the ethnic composition of the empire and strengthening the influence of barbarian social relations on the internal life of the Byzantine state, this did not result in the formation of any independent barbaric kingdoms on Byzantine territory proper.

Feudalism naturally developed differently in the different countries of Western Europe. In some it was based on a synthesis of Roman and German elements, in others it grew directly from the disintegrating clan-tribal relations that existed among the barbarians. In the West, however, the formation of feudal society was as a rule accompanied by the destruction of the slave-owning system, the breakdown of Roman statehood and Roman law and the decline of the cities and ancient culture.

But Byzantium was characterized by the spontaneous development of feudal relations within the disintegrating slave-owning society. The synthesis of the growing elements of feudalism within the empire with the social systems of the barbarians was less intensive than in Western Europe. This also conditioned the belated disintegration of the slave-owning system in the Byzantine state. Feudal society was formed in Byzantium in a situation of the protracted decline of the slave-owning system, the existence of Graeco-Roman statehood and legal consciousness and the retention of large cities and late antique civilization.

In the subsequent course of history these factors were of primary importance in defining the type of feudalism in Byzantium and the specifics of feudal development in the Byzantine Empire.

The unique character of Byzantine feudalism appeared both in the forms of landownership and in rent relations and in the character of seigniorial exploitation and the feudal institutions. The agrarian structure of the Byzantine Empire had numerous points of similarity and difference with the agrarian system in the West and the East. As distinct from Western Europe, Byzantium retained for a much

longer period the different type of slave-owning economy. But as in the West they were replaced by the free-peasant commune which was widespread in the empire in the 8th and 9th centuries. The internal organization of the Byzantine commune was quite different to the eastern, which was subordinated to a state of tax-paying communes and much closer to the western—the Mark. Like the latter it combined commune farming with private ownership of the peasant allotments.

A characteristic feature of Byzantine feudalism was the long retention of complete and unconditional private ownership of the land. This type of ownership existed both in the form of the large-scale patrimony and in the free peasant farms. State ownership of the land did not reach such a scale in Byzantium as in the East, but as against the West the tendencies to form this type of agrarian relations was fairly intensive in the Byzantine countryside.

The hierarchical structure of landownership, which found so clear and complete embodiment in Western Europe, was formed at a slightly slower rate in Byzantium. Radical changes took place only in the 12th century when alongside other forms two types of ownership became generally widespread—*pronia*, which was similar to the West European *beneficium*, and *honycon*, the granting of land for hereditary ownership on condition of performing a service to the state. The process of subinfeudation, however, was much less developed in Byzantium than in the West and in this respect the agrarian structure in the former was more akin to that in the East.

The patrimonial organization of farming in Byzantium combined with the centralized exploitation of the peasantry through a developed taxation system that was to a certain extent inherited from Rome. Nowhere in the West during the early and classical medieval period was the share of surplus product appropriated in the form of state taxes as high as it was in Byzantium. The Byzantine feudal lords were under the constant control of the central state authorities. The state decided the number of peasants on a private estate who were exempt from taxation, regulated the amount of rent to be paid to the lord and retained the right to confiscate land without a trial or a hearing. And only in the course of time did this control become slightly weakened.

As feudalism in Byzantium strengthened the

amount of feudal rent paid by the peasants to their lord increased and the amount of taxes paid to the government decreased. This brought the Byzantine system closer to the West European and further away from the East, where centralized forms of exploitation were firmly established.

The feudal institutions in Byzantium—*pronia*, *charistikos* and *exkuseja* were very similar to the corresponding institutions of the vassal-and-fief system in Western Europe. But in Byzantium these institutions had their own distinctive forms. With the significant expansion of centralized taxation *pronia* at times not only involved the transfer of landholdings to the feudal lord, but also granted him the right to collect certain tax quotas, while *exkuseja* (at least until the 13th century) amounted virtually to tax exemption.

As opposed to Western Europe the vassal-and-fief system in Byzantium remained comparatively undeveloped. The feudal lords here were more like a suite than vassals attached to their overlord by personal, land and ethical ties. A multi-rung feudal hierarchical ladder was never formed in Byzantium, which was quite natural considering the power of the central authorities and the developed state of the bureaucracy in Byzantium. Obviously elements of the purely Western vassal-and-fief bonds did form in Byzantium, but they were established *de facto*; they were never recognized by the state *de jure*.

The beginning of the crisis of feudalism, which chronologically coincided with the latter period of Byzantine history (13th-mid-15th centuries) was marked by a rise in the marketability of the feudal patrimonial estates, an increase in the share of rent paid in money and the appearance in the countryside of a new figure, the entrepreneur-leaseholder. This latter rented land for a long period from the private feudal owner and cultivated it with the help of sublessees. In the sphere of agrarian relations early capitalist forms approached maturity, but unlike Western Europe Byzantium was never able to develop further.

Towns and cities in Byzantium. The towns and cities in the Byzantine Empire had an unusual history. However paradoxical at first sight, Byzantine urban life reached its height not at the end of the empire's history, but at the beginning. While in the West many ancient cities were being swept away by the barbarian invasions or left deserted, Byzantium

at the dawn of its history could rightly be called a country of towns and cities.

In the 5th and 6th centuries the eastern provinces of the empire were renowned for the wealth and beauty of their palaces and temples and the splendour of their refined culture—Antioch in Syria, Alexandria in Egypt, Jerusalem, Edessa, Tyre, Beirut and Damascus remained great cities. In Asia Minor such cities as Ephesus, Nicaea and Nicomedia and in the Balkans Philippopolis were flourishing. And, of course, the capital, Constantinople, was expanding rapidly.

In the early Byzantine period the Romaic Empire had outstripped the West in the level of development of its urban crafts and trade. At that time the works of the Byzantine masters represented an unobtainable standard for craftsmen in many countries, and the Byzantine merchants, particularly the Syrians and the Egyptians, had penetrated the furthest regions of the inhabited world. In the East they traded with such exotic countries as Ceylon, India and China. In the south they bartered on the African continent and set up trading links with Ethiopia which abounded in gold, ivory and spices. In the North the trading vessels of the Byzantine explorers reached the shores of Britain and Scandinavia. In the Mediterranean, despite the danger of attacks from pirates, the Byzantines long maintained their hegemony in trade with Western Europe. Byzantine *solidi* (gold coins) depicting the heads of the Constantinople rulers were accepted in all countries and played an important role in international currency. At no time subsequently was Byzantine trade carried out on so great a scale as in the period prior to the Arab conquest and the loss of the eastern provinces. In the 6th century Kosmás Indikopléustés, a merchant and a brave seafarer, eloquently described his journeys to Arabia, East Africa and Ceylon. In his work *Christian Topography* he gave an outline of Byzantine trade with Ethiopia (Axumis), Ceylon (Taprobane), India and China. The trade links with China were affirmed by another writer in the 6th century, Theophanes of Byzantium, who related how two Nestorian monks had brought silkworm eggs in hollow sticks from China and thus begun the production of silk in Byzantium.

In the late 7th and 8th centuries Byzantium saw a similar decline in its cities and a stagnation of their economic activity as in the West, but the process of

deurbanization was much less strongly felt. The main cities still continued to exist not only as administrative and religious centres, but also as centres of trade, crafts, culture and education. First among these was Constantinople, the "queen of cities".

Differences in the social structure and internal organization of the ancient and feudal towns and cities were as evident in Byzantium as in Western Europe. But the birth of the feudal town in the empire took place under different circumstances than in the West. Feudal social relations in the towns and cities of Byzantium were formed during the lengthy disintegration of the traditions of the ancient polis. This had both positive and negative consequences. The advantage Byzantium had in comparison with other European states was the fact that its towns and cities maintained the relatively high level of craft production technology that was inherited from antiquity. The negative side, however, was the much greater (than in the West) use of slave labour which slowed down the development of new forms of production relations in the towns and cities. This was largely the situation until the 10th and 11th centuries when the main figure in town craft production was the free craftsman, the owner of his own small workshop. The Byzantine city in the 10th century, according to the laws governing craft and trading corporations in Constantinople which are contained in the *Book of Eparch* was in many respects a new feudal entity that maintained the traditions of antiquity.

Another important condition that influenced the formation of the feudal town in Byzantium was the total state regimentation of urban crafts and trade. This phenomenon which was so characteristic of medieval Byzantium also had its positive and negative sides. State patronage for the trade and craft corporations stimulated the temporary flourishing of the urban crafts. State support guaranteed protection for the craft corporations from non-guild competition, trading monopoly for the guilds, an abundance of orders from the imperial palace, the army and the nobility, and safety on the roads and in the towns of the empire. The forms and methods of state control and the internal organization of the corporations are also fully described in the *Book of Eparch*.

State help, however, was bought at a high price. The guilds lost their independence and came under

the strict control of the central authorities. For the time being the advantages that the trade and craft corporations had gained from their privileged position exceeded the damage caused to their activity by oppressive state control. Moreover, these privileges even gave the Byzantine corporations tangible advantages when compared with the conditions under which the craft and merchant guilds in other European countries worked.

Until the 12th century the economic superiority of Byzantium over other European countries was undisputed. The invention of "Greek fire" (a substance that burned on water and that could be used in naval battles and in besieging fortresses) and the use of the slanted sail guaranteed the empire an untouchable position at sea. The flourishing of building technology and the developments made in the exact and natural sciences, particularly mathematics, astronomy and medicine, helped Byzantium stay ahead of many of the states in the East and the West.

The Byzantine towns and cities which overcame the crisis of the 7th and 8th centuries began again to flourish economically. This upsurge which began in the 9th century reached its height in the 11th and 12th centuries, when not only the capital, which until the 12th century remained the main transit point between East and West, but many of the provincial towns and cities went through a period of economic boom. Despite competition from the Arabs and the Normans, Byzantine seafaring and trade continued to dominate the Mediterranean, and Byzantine *solidi* were quoted high on all the markets from the Euphrates to Gibraltar. The organization of Byzantine sea-borne trade, naval laws and seafaring technology were copied or imitated by many of the countries in South-East and Western Europe.

The radical change in their growing economic development occurred in the late 12th century, when economic supremacy passed to the states of Western Europe. Probably the most important reason for this was the different fates of the Byzantine and the West European towns and cities.

The continued growth of urban centres in Western Europe brought about radical changes in the whole social and economic life of feudal society, and later the emergence in the most advanced countries of the time, viz., Italy and the Netherlands, of early

capitalist relations. In Byzantium, on the other hand, the growth of the towns and cities was not long-lasting and brought about no radical changes in the feudal economics of the country. During the late Byzantine period there was even a gradual dying out of economic activity among the towns and cities of the empire.

The crafts in the towns and cities of late Byzantium never managed to reach the manufacture stage of development. Whereas the disintegration of the guild system in the West led to a higher stage in the organization of production, the corporate system in Byzantium disintegrated before conditions existed for the development of manufacture. Unable to withstand competition from the Italians Byzantine craft began to wither. This was not only because during this period the Italians had the benefit of patronage from the Byzantine government, but mainly because growth of manufacture in Italy at the time ensured the supremacy of Italian craft production over Byzantine. Byzantium also lost its former monopoly of commercial mediation in trade between East and West, as this fell to the merchants of Venice and Genoa. The reasons for this were threefold: the continued rivalry between Constantinople and provincial towns like Thessalonika, Mistra, Monemvasia, Patras and Corinth; the weakening of the free peasant communes, which held up the formation of a strong internal market; and feudal strife and foreign policy failures.

The fates of the Byzantine and East European trade and craft corporations were also different. The Byzantine corporations began increasingly over the course of time to feel the oppressive effects of state control which curbed initiative. Brought up in the hothouse conditions of exceptional privilege Byzantine trade was unable to compete with the flourishing craft production from Italy once it lost the support of the state and no longer had its former guaranteed orders from the imperial court and the nobility. From the 12th century onwards the Byzantine trade and craft corporations went into decline and by the 13th and 14th centuries many had disappeared.

In later Byzantium the urban merchants and craftsmen were never able to consolidate into a united and influential social estate of townsfolk capable of resisting the feudal offensive. The Byzantine government tried continually to sow dissent among

the townsmen, while the feudal lords took hold not only of the economy, but also of political power in the towns and villages. They bought up the urban lands, replaced free craft labour with that of the feudal dependents and took over the running of the towns.

Western Europe at the time, however, showed a quite different picture. The West European guilds which developed later than the Byzantine corporations not only stimulated the growth of trade and craft, but also helped the political unification of an urban trade-and-craft social estate. The growth of its wealth and political influence resulted in the flourishing of the urban communes, which not only fought stubbornly against the feudal lords for their freedoms, but also succeeded in liberating many towns from the power of the feudal lords.

It would, however, be mistaken to suggest that there was no communal movement in Byzantium or no struggle on the part of the townsmen for their privileges and freedoms. The Republic of Zealots which was formed in Thessalonika and lasted from 1342 to 1349 was a prime example of such a movement. But its destruction at the hands of foreign troops brought in by the feudal lords showed quite clearly the economic weakness of the Byzantine city and its political isolation. Having lost the support of the state, the townsmen were not able to acquire new influential allies. The peasant uprisings were too spontaneous and uncoordinated to give any real help to the towns, while a united social estate of knights, which could as in the West have become the allies of the townsmen, was never formed in Byzantium throughout the whole existence of the empire. All this explains why the Byzantine towns and cities were unsuccessful in their struggle with the feudal lords and never became the decisive force for the progressive development of society as did the towns and cities of Western Europe.

In no other sphere of social life is the difference between Byzantium and the West and its similarity with the East, particularly Sassanid Persia and the Arab Caliphate, so apparent as in the organization of state power. Byzantine state structure was based largely on the system it inherited from the later Roman Empire. Of course, there were frequent tendencies to political separation and feudal fragmentation. But with the exception of the later stage of its history the Romaic state remained centralized.

State centralization. The political structure of the Byzantine Empire. State centralization reached its acme in the early period of Byzantine history. At that time Byzantium was the only legal heir to the Roman Empire and laid claims to be the mistress of the whole civilized world. Although the reality of the barbarian invasions sharply contrasted with these claims, the idea of a world monarchy with its centre at Constantinople existed not only in Byzantium itself, but also in the barbarian kingdoms of the West. Until the formation of Charlemagne's Empire the barbarian kingdoms recognized, at least nominally, the supreme power of the emperor at Constantinople. The barbarian kings considered it an honour to receive from the emperor the highest imperial titles and the luxuriant insignia of their power. The Latin chroniclers frequently dated events by the years of the Byzantine emperors' reign and the courts of the Western rulers often minted money in imitation of the Byzantine *solidus*. For a long time many of the rulers of South-Eastern and Western Europe tried not only to imitate the customs of the Byzantine court, but also to use the Byzantine system of government and diplomacy as an example for a similar administration in their own countries.

During the 7th century the centralized system of the Byzantine state was somewhat weakened, but it had once again strengthened by the 10th century—the time at which all forms of statehood underwent a clear crystallization. Byzantium was now no longer a world monarchy, but a medieval feudal state albeit with a powerful central government. It was governed from the imperial chancellery and the provincial governors, who were paid by the treasury, were dependent on the centre. An enormous role in the life of Byzantine society was played by the centralized bureaucratic apparatus. These civil servants formed an elite caste ruled by a strict hierarchy according to a table of ranks.

The centralization of the state also made its mark on the social and economic structure of Byzantium. It was precisely the existence of a centralized state which determined such characteristics of the social structure of the Byzantine Empire as the presence of numerous categories of peasants subject directly to the state, the attachment of the peasants to the villages and the tax yoke, and state control of the crafts and commerce. The centralized state and splendour

of the imperial court not only had the support of influential circles among the higher aristocracy in the capital and the higher ranks of the bureaucracy, but also in their turn engendered the cohesion and strength of and provided a guarantee of wealth and privilege for the Constantinople nobility.

At the same time the centralization of the state determined the relative weakness of the provincial feudal aristocracy. Unlike the autocratic lords of Europe the Byzantine feudal lords were never able to divide up the empire into isolated domains.

This, of course, does not mean that there was no permanent struggle between centrifugal and centripetal forces in the Byzantine state. On the contrary, such a struggle increased as the empire became more feudalized. The whole political history of the Byzantine Empire is filled with instances of the conflict between the bureaucratic nobility in Constantinople and the local feudal landowners. The rivalry between these social groups and their succession in power was the germ of the whole struggle within the imperial ruling class, which frequently took the form of palace revolts, insurrections by provincial feudal lords and dynastic conspiracies.

In its political structure Byzantium was an autocratic monarchy. The power of the emperor was limited by no conditions and no "social contract". He could execute his subjects and confiscate their property, he could appoint or remove officials and he could proclaim laws. He was the supreme judge, the formulator of foreign policy and the commander of the army. His power was considered divine. However, this theoretically unlimited power frequently turned out to have its limitations. It was not the privilege of one or another aristocratic family and therefore the son of the emperor did not automatically become heir to the throne. This fact led to all manner of usurpations and did nothing to make the throne stable. Often the autocracy of the *basileus* was nothing more than a plaything in the hands of contesting social groups. Many of the Byzantine rulers lasted only a short while, either being sent off to a monastery or murdered by hired killers.

Nevertheless, it was Byzantium which finally formulated and gave theoretical justification to the dominant teaching in the Middle Ages of the monarchic state. This was rooted in the polity of Plato and the Neoplatonists, but it subsequently underwent an important evolution. The Christian Church in

Byzantium stated the theory of the divine right of kings and gave religious sanction to an unlimited Christian monarchy. An important role in the formulation of this teaching on autocracy was played by the belief in the divinity of the emperor which was inherited from ancient Rome together with the philosophical and political concepts of absolute power which came to Byzantium from the East. Medieval Byzantium, however, still retained for a long time the rudiments of the ancient ideas about electing the *basileus* through a state council (*synkletos*) and the military and maintaining the fiction that he was elected by the people. As time passed by the power of the *basileus*, who was curbed by ceremony and the routine of social tradition both in theory and in practice, became increasingly divorced from society and was raised increasingly above the people. This received its theoretical justification in the works of the Byzantine philosophers, politicians and theologians, who frequently treated the subject of creating an ideal emperor. The doctrine of imperial power and the image of an ideal emperor, however, changed significantly under the influence of Christianity. The ideal *basileus* was now required to show the Christian virtues of honour and mercy and his life was evaluated from a moral and ethical standpoint.

The Byzantines' political views on the state and the theory they formulated on the divine right of the emperor had an undoubtedly powerful influence on the concepts of supreme power in the countries of South-East and Eastern Europe, particularly Russia.

The Byzantine Church. The specific features of Eastern Christianity and the Byzantine Church were due to the special style of social and ideological life in the Byzantine Empire. From the very outset there had been serious differences between the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Western Catholic Church. Although both genetically sprang from the same oecumenical church organization, each from the very first centuries of their existence—in the 4th-5th centuries—was following its own special path.

Both the Churches of Rome and Constantinople were nominally united, but in fact over the course of the centuries a struggle went on, sometimes covert, sometimes overt, between the Papal throne and Constantinople patriarchate for religious and politi-

cal leadership. This struggle abounded in dramatic collisions and passionate, dogmatic polemics. Frequently the quarrel between East and West resulted in skirmishes between the popes and the patriarchs and led in the mid-11th century to a schism. The ecclesiastical world, despite periodic reconciliations, was so unstable that a final schism was inevitable. It occurred after the Crusaders took Byzantium in 1204 when the Catholic Church tried to proclaim Papal supremacy in the East but came up against resolute resistance from the Greek clergy and the broad masses of the population. In subsequent centuries the religious differences developed into open enmity between the "schismatics" (the Greeks) and the Catholic West and all further attempts at reunification were unsuccessful.

Differences of both a social and political character and of a dogmatic and ceremonial nature arose very early between the Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church. These differences, of course, largely reflected the differences in the social structure and ideological life of both East and West.

In Byzantium the Church had none of the economic and administrative autarchy that it had in Western Europe. Although the churches and the monasteries held vast areas of land, they never developed into the closed state-independent feudal principalities like the church patrimonies and abbeys of the West. The Orthodox Church to a much greater extent than the Catholic Church depended on the state, on imperial assignations and was much more closely linked with the centralized state system.

The Orthodox hierarchy in the Byzantine Empire with rare exceptions made no claims to supremacy over the lay authorities. The Orthodox Church in Byzantium, existing as it did in a centralized state, pursued no universalist tendencies, preaching on the contrary the unity between the Church and the state. In feudal fragmented Europe, on the other hand, it was precisely the Papacy that proclaimed universalist ideas in a bid to become the centre of the Catholic world and remain independent and above the state. It was the Papal Curia which inflexibly upheld the doctrine of the primacy of spiritual power over lay power.

Whereas in the West a strictly centralized organization of the Church developed where only the Pope possessed infallible moral authority not to mention enormous real power, the dominant system

in the East was that known as pentarchy, according to which five fully equal patriarchs existed in Rome, in Constantinople, in Alexandria, in Antioch and in Jerusalem. Among these patriarchs there was no unity and they were unwilling to recognize the supremacy of any one. Rome and Constantinople continually quarreled over supremacy and in the earlier period the other patriarchs also made similar claims. In the Orthodox Church the ecclesiastical synods stood higher than the patriarchs and only they had the right to make church laws. But these synods themselves were subject to the lay powers, unlike the West where with rare exceptions they carried out the will of the Papacy.

The internal organization of the Catholic Church was more aristocratic than the Orthodox. Its hierarchy was established in strict sequence and the corporative community of the clergy was very strong. In Western and Central Europe the Catholic Church stood opposed to the faith as a special united privileged corporation. This isolation was particularly evident, for example, in the communion service where the priests took bread and wine and the laity only bread and in the vow of celibacy which was binding on all the priesthood. In Byzantium the dividing line between the priesthood and the laity was nowhere near so clear-cut. All took communion in the same way, while only the bishops and the monks were required to be celibate. In the Eastern Church the opposition between the high and the low priesthood was felt to a slightly less degree.

Such distinctions in the structure of the two Churches were naturally connected with their differences over questions of dogma. Dominant in the West was the teaching that salvation depended on the activity of one institution—the Church which evaluated the services performed by the believer and could grant absolution. Eastern Christianity, on the other hand, put much greater emphasis on the individual. Prayer was accorded a very important role in the process of salvation as was mystical confluence with the divinity through its meditation. Here the ideological traditions of both Churches were clearly revealed: in the West the influence of jurisprudence which went back to classical Roman law; in the East the influence of speculative Greek philosophy, particularly Neoplatonism.

Between the Orthodox and the Catholic Church

there were also fairly sharp discrepancies over ceremonial worship. These differences developed over the centuries, not only as a result of dogmatic disagreements, but also as the symbolic expression of the ecclesiastical traditions of East and West. These in their turn were affected by local customs adopted into church ceremony in one place or another. The linguistic differences and territorial separation of East and West naturally deepened the purely liturgical differences. Disputes on questions of ritual between the Catholic and Orthodox priesthoods frequently involved the broad masses of the people being drawn into the struggle and therefore increased the differences even further.

However, in both the Catholic countries of Europe and in Byzantium there always existed alongside the trends to alienate the Churches from each other certain social forces that supported not only economic and cultural, but also religious unity between East and West. But in the medieval period this unity was never reached.

Heresy in Byzantium. Byzantium was the cradle of many early popular heretic movements. Their variety was enormous. They included adherents of numerous different sects from the most radical dualists like the Manichaeans, the Montanists and the Messianists which were of a more democratic nature to more moderate religious trends like the Arians, the Nestorians and the Monophysites, who disagreed with the dogma of the dominant Orthodox Church. The radical heretic movements were most widespread among the rural population, although heretical ideas were not uncommon in the towns. The social motifs underlying the popular heretical teachings were often mixed up with the most varied political interests among the different tribes and social groups that participated in the religious and dogmatic struggle.

Not infrequently they were linked with rivalries among the various factions of the dominant class and separatist tendencies in individual provinces. But despite the very important shades and gradations in the character and direction of heretical currents in Byzantium, these movements, to one degree or another, always involved the popular masses. This inevitably gave the various heresies not only a religious but also a social motivation. Some of the Eastern religious teachings, like for example Arianism, also became widespread in the barbaric

kingdoms of the West. This enormously wide range of heretic movements characterized the class struggle in Byzantium throughout the whole of the early medieval period.

The more radical of the heretical teachings of Byzantium were characterized by such extremes as religious exultation bordering on mystical ecstasy, a thirst for martyrdom, a passionate protest against all earthly rulers wallowing in sin, a rebellious spirit combined with an uncompromising asceticism that was due to a belief in the eternal conflict between good and evil, the spirit and the flesh and a complete rejection of all earthly pleasures.

The ideological sources of the religious, philosophical, moral and ethical concepts, which lay at the base of much of the dogma behind the Byzantine heresies are to be found in the East. But under the influence of social conditions in Byzantium and the excessively saturated spiritual life of all the different strata of society, these Eastern heretical teachings underwent significant changes and frequently developed into completely new forms. At the same time Byzantium itself made a great contribution as a mediator to the spread of popular heretic teachings in South-East and later in Western Europe. This can be clearly traced through the example of the Paulician movement. Beginning in Armenia in the 7th century, it absorbed much of the Eastern philosophical and aesthetic doctrines that had combined with the ideas of early Christianity. It grew on Byzantine soil and gradually developed from an exclusive heretical sect into a mass antifeudal movement by the 9th and 10th centuries. Later Paulicianism spread to the Balkans and in the similar, but slightly modified social conditions merged with Bogomilism which was one of the strongest antifeudal popular heretical movements that existed in South-East Europe in the medieval period (11th-14th centuries).

In turn, the dualist ideas of the Bogomilian teaching, whose seeds were carried to the socially similar soil of the West, were taken up by the adherents of certain West European heresies, particularly the Cathari (Albigenses) in southern France, northern Italy and part of Germany.

But the antifeudal peasant uprisings in Byzantine did not always take the form of religious heresies. Ethnic contradictions also played an important part as well as social and religious differences.

There were periods in Byzantine history when the social struggle of the people was combined with resistance to foreign invaders and took on a patriotic colouring. This occurred, for example, during the Latin Sway (1204-1261) when the independent Greek peasants were faced with oppression from the feudal lords and the Frankish invaders at one and the same time, and the merchants and craftsmen of the Byzantine towns were up against formidable and merciless competitors, the Italian merchants. And in addition to this, there were the differences in language, cultural traditions and religious beliefs. During the early period social opposition tended to come on the whole from the more organized urban movements, but the classical medieval period tended to see increasingly wide antifeudal rebellions from the peasant masses. At this time urban insurrections broke out only in individual hotbeds which chiefly meant the capital and other major cities. In subsequent centuries the towns and cities once again became the focus of social struggle, but even by the 14th century, which saw the culmination of urban social movements in Byzantium, they had still not reached the social consolidation and political scale of the urban insurrections that were taking place in the West, particularly in Italy, at that time. This is explained by the relative weakness of the Byzantine towns, the lack of unity among the townsmen, and the political immaturity of the urban poor. Even the most powerful urban movement in Byzantium, the Thessalonika Republic of Zealots, had no firm allies and perished through its lack of internal cohesion and because it remained isolated from the world outside. The temporary alliance between the townsmen and the peasant insurrectionists collapsed rapidly, while the feudal lords in their struggle against the Zealots not only created a close-knit league, but for the sake of victory opened the way into the heart of the Byzantine state to its implacable enemies, the Osman Turks.

Byzantine law. The distinctive features of Byzantine social development can also be seen quite clearly in the state's legal system. To a much greater extent and for a much longer time than in the West both civil and criminal law in the Byzantine Empire were affected by Roman legal traditions. Byzantium, particularly in the early period of its history, was practically the only state in the medieval world

which retained a single codified law that was binding upon all the population of the empire. In a world of barbarian kingdoms, dominated by the customary law of the so-called "Leges Barbarorum" which were locally separated and related to different social phenomena and in which the Roman legal norms lost their force of universal law, Byzantium unquestionably stood out for the relative order and uniformity of its legislative and judicial system. The legislation of the early Byzantine period was based on the finest achievements of Roman legal thought: it completed the elaboration of the Roman theory of law, finally formalized such theoretical concepts of jurisprudence as right, law, custom, specified the difference between private and public law, established the norms of criminal law and procedure and laid the foundations for conducting international relations.

Byzantium has been famous throughout history for the *Codex Justinianus*, which was referred to by contemporaries as the "altar of all legal science". It consisted of the *Codex* proper, which contained the main postulates of Roman law, the *Digesta*—a vast collection of legal provisions borrowed from the Roman jurists, the *Institutes*—a brief guide to jurisprudence, and the *Novellae*—new laws instituted by Justinian himself. It was Justinian's code of civil law that made it possible for jurists in medieval and modern times to have access to this treasure-house of Roman juridical science.

But jurisprudence in early Byzantium was not only limited to the codification of Roman law. It was considerably enriched with the philosophico-legal ideas of the Greek philosophers as well as the religious and ethical concepts of the Eastern nations and of Christianity. All this resulted in the formation of the theory of "natural law", the concept of "humaneness" and the idea that all men were equal before the law. A mutual interchange, as it were, of legal and ethical values took place between the Graeco-Roman and the Eastern world. Ahead of the rest of Europe Byzantium became the first country in which the principle of complete private ownership was given juridical sanction in the civil law then in force, and this had enormous consequences. Protecting private ownership stimulated the development of commodity-money relations, particularly in the Byzantine towns and cities.

The juridical sanctioning of the principle of pri-

vate ownership, the regulation of trade—usurious transactions and the right of inheritance and other institutions of Roman-Byzantine law had an undoubted influence on the development of juridical thought in Western and Eastern Europe and gave rise to the acceptance of Justinian law in bourgeois society.

The historical importance of Byzantine law, however, is far from being limited to the fact that it preserved the highest achievements of Roman law for future generations.

Feudal Byzantine law gradually changed and developed to reflect in new juridical statutes the whole variety of the social, economic and political life of Byzantine society. While not as grand as Roman law from the theoretical point of view, Byzantine law of the classical medieval period nevertheless reflected the evolution of forms of ownership and exploitation, the changes in social relations and the transformation of the structure of the classes, of the state, of the Church and of the taxation system.

It is true, of course, that the thick covering of Roman legal terminology at times makes it hard to discern the maturing of new social institutions. Feudal ownership law in Byzantium, for example, was very much hampered by the existence of Roman legal traditions with their consistently maintained principle of private ownership.

Classical Romano-Byzantine law which still existed in later Byzantium obstructed to a certain extent the legal formalization of relative hierarchical feudal ownership. And the comparatively weak development of early capitalist elements meant that this law could still not be used for the legal sanctioning of the new social relations. This is the reason for the seemingly paradoxical phenomenon that classical Romano-Byzantine law was given impetus to a qualitatively new development not in the Byzantine itself but in Western Europe. In the West where early capitalist relations developed more intensively, this law based on private ownership was applied to the real socio-political conditions of life. The acceptance of Romano-Byzantine law stimulated, in turn, the further formalization of the legal institutions of bourgeois society in Western Europe. **Byzantine diplomacy and international relations.** The Byzantine state played a prominent role in medieval international relations. This role obviously changed throughout the empire's history,

fluctuating from periods of greatness to periods of military defeat and diplomatic failure. But Byzantium always maintained the most diverse international ties and always tried to influence the course of international events not only in Europe, but also in Asia and at times even in Africa.

Byzantium reached the early period of its greatness under the reign of Justinian (527-565). Then the empire not only drove off the barbarian invaders, but also began an extensive policy of conquest in the West. North Africa was taken from the Vandals, Italy from the Ostrogoths and part of Spain from the Visigoths. For a short time the Roman Empire was restored almost to its original proportions. But under Justinian's successors, most of these conquests were lost.

Throughout the centuries Byzantium's enemies changed many times, as did her allies. In the early medieval period the main danger lay in the east and the north. First they had to beat back invasions from the armoured Sassanid forces and the terrible, but disorderly barbarians—Huns, Goths, Avars and Slavs. Later came the Arabs who also were unable to break the might of Byzantium. Frequently the walls of Constantinople were besieged by Rus and Bulgars. On many occasions Byzantium herself attacked her neighbours, dealing them crushing blows. Despite the continuing struggle in the East which was waged with the Seljuk Turks, the main danger to Byzantium from the 11th century onwards came from the Latin West. It was from here that the arrogant Normans appeared together with the calculating Italians and the first conquerors of Constantinople—the knights of the fourth crusade (1204).

In subsequent centuries (1261-1453) the greatest, and this time fatal, danger came once again from the East, when floods of Osman Turks wiped out the empire. The destruction of Byzantium was brought about with the treacherous connivance of the West and continued clashes with the Slavic states in the Balkans which weakened both the Byzantines and the Slavs in the face of their common enemy.

Only after the fall of Byzantium did an astounded Europe come to realize the historical role that that country had for so many years played in medieval international politics.

Like Ancient Rus, the Byzantine Empire had

acted for centuries as a buffer between Western Europe and the East, a breakwater upon which the Turkish and Mongolian hordes had crashed in wave upon wave.

Throughout its history the Byzantine state was at the centre of a complex international political struggle. Perhaps it was just this difficult international situation that forged such subtle and sophisticated diplomacy. Byzantine foreign policy was renowned for its ability to combine secret diplomatic intrigue with well-aimed military strikes. The Byzantine leaders were particularly clever at crushing a powerful enemy with someone else's forces, at weaving cunning plots and counter-plots and at turning an enemy's allies against him.

Surrounded by dangers Byzantium was continually occupied in avoiding a war on two fronts simultaneously, and often emerged the victor out of the most difficult situations.

The Byzantine government would not stop at using any means within its power to prevent its enemies uniting. Foreign rulers were bribed, intrigues fomented at foreign courts, nation was set against nation, and tribal and religious differences among neighbouring states inflamed. Byzantine diplomacy was renowned for its treachery. Its motto was the well-known political principle of the Romans—"divide and rule!" Perfidy, guile and the ability to weave the most subtle webs of intrigue and play the diplomatic moves like a game of chess were the essential features of the Byzantine diplomatic system. The Byzantine diplomats were great masters at getting their enemy's best friends to betray them, at dividing their enemies and buying their allies for gold and high-ranking imperial titles. Dynastic marriages between foreign rulers and Byzantine princesses were also widely used with the aim of bringing neighbouring states under Byzantine influence.

Byzantine diplomacy also had a number of other characteristic features that distinguished it from the diplomacy of the other feudal European states. Primarily it was centralized, guided entirely from the imperial court under the vigilant control of the state. Though centuries passed, though various dominant factions came to power, though Byzantine emperors came and went, and though the aims of Byzantine foreign policy changed according to the internal and external situation, the Byzantine diplo-

matic system remained centralized and its strategy and tactics were continually improved.

In comparison with the unsystematic, disorganized and frequently uncoordinated diplomacy of the barbaric kingdoms and the feudal principalities in fragmented Europe, the centralized and firmly state-directed diplomacy of Byzantium had immense advantages. Employing the methods of the later Roman Empire, the Byzantine state was able to create an unusually ramified diplomatic system. It possessed an enormous staff of highly educated diplomats and a host of translators who were versed in all the languages of the known world.

It is to Byzantine diplomacy that we owe the first elaboration of the rules of maintaining embassies abroad. These included the system for receiving and dispatching embassies and for defining the rights and duties of ambassadors and other diplomats. The position of the Byzantine ambassador at foreign courts reveals a dramatic ambiguity: on the one hand, Byzantium was extremely concerned to maintain the highest prestige for its ambassador, on the other, the ambassador was never anything more than the executor of the emperor's will and could undertake serious action only with the latter's approval. To protect its diplomats Byzantium introduced the principle of ambassadorial inviolability, a principle which was later to become widespread throughout Western and Eastern Europe. Byzantine diplomacy introduced the procedure for concluding or abrogating treaties with foreign powers, established standard forms of such treaties usually in the languages of both contracting parties and developed the ceremony for the signing of treaties. Byzantine diplomats used a system of diplomatic credentials for their ambassadors and determined many of the other formalities of diplomatic ritual. The magnificent ceremony for receiving foreign ambassadors at the imperial court of Constantinople was intended to dazzle the barbarians with its grandeur, impress them by the strength of the Byzantine state and conceal from them all its weaknesses. The aim of Byzantine diplomacy was to both charm and intimidate foreign ambassadors so as to deceive them the more easily. Foreign ambassadors at the Byzantine court lived virtually the lives of honoured prisoners, inasmuch as they were completely isolated from the people of the empire. They were either given luxurious presents, or if in-

tractable, humiliated and even sent death threats. All foreign diplomats coming to Byzantium were enmeshed in an intricate net of indefatigable vigilance.

Byzantine diplomacy made skilful use of commercial, religious and cultural ties with other countries and peoples in the foreign political interests of the Byzantine state. The majority of Byzantine merchants, missionaries and diplomats acted unanimously in spreading the influence of the Byzantine state far beyond its borders. At times merchants or missionaries would also fulfil diplomatic functions, if they entered far off and unknown countries ahead of the diplomats.

The Byzantine diplomats, merchants and missionaries would tirelessly collect information about all the countries they visited in the interests of their own government. These would include facts about the political atmosphere at the courts of the foreign rulers and about the military matters, trade, customs and traditions of the various peoples. Sometimes on the basis of these observations interesting descriptions were made of the most exotic countries, which have subsequently provided excellent historical sources.

One such example was the uniquely factual writings of the Byzantine diplomat and historian of the 5th century, Priscus of Panium, on the land of the Huns, their life and customs and their terrible ruler, Attila. Equally interesting was the description of Iran and Ostrogoth Italy by the diplomat, Peter Patricius, the description of the land of the Himyarites in Arabia and Ethiopia (Axumis) in the writings of Nonnus and finally Menander's account of the barbaric Turks in Central Asia and Altai in the 6th century and of the first Turkic Khanate in Altai.

Commercial and religious interests in Byzantium often controlled the direction of Byzantine diplomacy. The Church and the church missions played a particularly important role in Byzantine foreign policy and the spread of Christianity was a major diplomatic instrument for many centuries. The flexibility and guile that characterized Byzantine diplomacy were equally true of the missionary activity of the Orthodox Church. In an attempt to conceal their real political aims under a mask of goodwill and to attract the sympathy of the newly converted peoples, the patriarchate at Constantinople

employed far more varied methods in their missionary work, than the Papacy. The Byzantine missionaries preached Christianity and held services in the local languages, translating all the Holy Scripture into these languages. Catholic Rome, on the other hand, strictly opposed liturgy in any language but Latin. This flexible approach on the part of the Orthodox Church did much to promote the success of Byzantine diplomacy and establish Byzantine political and ideological influence in the Christianised countries.

Byzantine diplomacy had a great influence on the organization of diplomatic affairs in the medieval states of South-Eastern and Eastern Europe, particularly Ancient Rus, and for a long time remained the standard for the numerous barbarian peoples. The organizational principles and external forms of Byzantine diplomatic etiquette lay at the basis of European diplomacy during the feudal period. In terms of its purposefulness and rigid centralization the Byzantine diplomatic system can only be compared in Europe with the diplomacy of the Catholic Papacy and that of the Venetian Republic. But the Venetian doges and the Papal Curia took much from the Byzantine school of diplomacy and many of their agents were pupils and followers of the Byzantine diplomats.

But Byzantine diplomacy in its turn also took much from the diplomatic organization of the Eastern monarchies, particularly Sassanid Iran and the Arabian Caliphate. Despite long wars with the Persians and the Arabs, Byzantium maintained close links with the East, which naturally led to the mutual assimilation of each other's diplomatic tactics and strategy. This was further helped by the fact that the diplomatic system of Iran and the Arab Caliphate was also largely centralized, being directed by the government of the shahs and the caliphs, and was thus closer to Byzantine diplomacy, than the diplomatic services of the feudal principalities and kingdoms of Europe.

Byzantine culture. In the history of world culture Byzantine civilization, which amazed contemporaries not only with its external grandeur, but with its internal nobility, elegance of form and depth of thought must take a special and unquestionably prominent place. Throughout the whole of its thousand-year history the Byzantine Empire—the direct heir to the Graeco-Roman world and the

Hellenistic East—remained the centre of an original and truly grand culture. Furthermore, until the 12th century in terms of the level of education the intensity of its cultural life and the wealth and splendour of its material culture, Byzantium undoubtedly stood ahead of all the countries of medieval Europe.

The formation of Byzantine culture was a very complex and at times agonizingly contradictory process. Through the difficult centuries of barbarian invasion Byzantine civilization, unlike West European, remained the last bulwark of Graeco-Roman tradition. Just as the Byzantine state stood up against the barbarian invasions, so Byzantine culture was able to withstand the waves of barbarian influence. At the same time Byzantine culture absorbed the artistic traditions of the numerous peoples that inhabited the empire. Not only Greeks, but Syrians, Copts, Armenians and Georgians, tribes from Asia Minor and Slavs, the peoples of the Crimea and the Latin population of Illyria made in varying degrees their contribution to the formation of Byzantine culture. But after its final formation the cultural development of these peoples went forward under the levelling domination of Byzantine civilization.

The emergence of Byzantine culture took place amid the deeply contradictory ideological life of early Byzantium (4th to the mid-7th centuries). It was a time in which the ideology of Byzantine society was formed and Christianity established after a harsh struggle with the philosophical, scientific and aesthetic ideas of the ancient world. Ideological life at the time witnessed a passionate dispute between the pagan philosophers and the Christian theologians and noisy clashes between famous orators and fanatic monks. Christianity led an energetic offensive, but Paganism still held on to its final positions and was at times victorious, though only temporarily.

Early Byzantium saw the flourishing of Neoplatonism. There appeared a whole pleiad of brilliant philosophers-Neoplatonists like Proclus Diadochi, Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite. The last defenders of Paganism—Julian the Apostate (the emperor who was known as the philosopher on the throne and who reigned from 361 to 362), the fourth century orators, Themistius and Libanius, and the fourth and fifth century historians, Ammianus Mar-

cellinus and Zosimus, who vainly tried to resurrect the ideas of waning paganism.

Ancient traditions still predominated in the natural sciences, which retained the ancient cosmogony and cosmography, a high level of scientific knowledge and classical education. The non-ecclesiastical historiography of early Byzantium, which includes the works of Procopius, Agathias and Theophilact Symokattes, the traditions of antiquity were still strong.

It was also during this period that the slow but inflexible process whereby the ancient and Christian cultures merged, interpenetrated each other and mutually enriched each other was taking place. Christianity, however, having been victorious politically, could struggle with the undying charm of antiquity on the fields of philosophy, science, classical literature and art only by assimilating and putting to its own use the highest achievements of pagan civilization.

Whereas under early Christianity with its rigorist intolerance in art there was a breach of harmony between form and content, and the didactic nature and stern asceticism of early Christianity resulted in moral admonition taking precedence over artistic form and all that bore the brand of paganism being scornfully rejected, in later years this situation changed considerably. The most educated and farsighted of the Christian theologians understood the need to assimilate the whole of Pagan culture and use its meticulous art forms in creating new philosophical and aesthetic concepts.

In the patristic literature of the early Byzantine period, the works of Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory of Nazianzus, which lay the foundations of medieval Christian theology, we see a combination of the ideas of early Christianity and Neoplatonic philosophy, a paradoxical interweaving of ancient rhetorical forms and new ideological content. Christian dogma was formed under the powerful influence of Neoplatonism. The mystical and theistic character of Neoplatonist teaching and its ethics, which were echoed in Christian asceticism, made it possible for the two to merge. In Neoplatonism itself the struggle between the two currents—the radical which was hostile to Christianity, and the more moderate—gradually resulted in a victory for those who favoured compromise with Christian theology. There was, as it were,

a biunial process of rejecting and separating, and on the other hand, drawing together and merging Neoplatonism and Christian theology. It was finally completed with Neoplatonism being totally absorbed by Christianity.

In the transition period between the destruction of the slave-owning society and the emergence of feudalism radical changes took place in all aspects of Byzantine cultural life. A new concept of aesthetics came into being and a new vision of the world that was more in line with the thinking and emotional needs of medieval man. Patriotic literature, Biblical cosmography, liturgical poetry, monastic stories, world chronicles and Christian hagiography, all imbued with religious consciousness, gradually began to take their hold on Byzantine society.

Early Byzantine ecclesiastical historiography—the works of Eusebius (Pamphili), Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret of Cyrrhus and Evagrius—formed a Christian concept of world history based on the Bible. Concepts of historical time and space were altered with the ancient theory of cyclic historical development being replaced by a linear concept of time which now counted from the Creation to infinity. The proud exclusiveness of the Roman Empire which despised the barbarians was replaced by the readiness of Christendom to accept all peoples.

The feverish pace of a life full of social and political upheavals was reflected in every aspect of the artisan creation of people in that period. Ideas were in a constant state of flux. Trinitarians disputed with Christologians, the dominant Orthodox Church waged an implacable struggle against heresies and the terrifying sermons of St. John Chrysostom (5th century) thundered out against heretic and sinner alike. The spiritual life of society was the scene of dramatic intensity. And at the same time it revealed an astounding mixture of Pagan and Christian ideas, thoughts, images and concepts, a colourful combination of Pagan mythology and Christian mysticism (in, for example, the epic poetry of Nonnus of Panopolis). The transition period to the new medieval culture saw a number of philosophers, writers and poets who were talented, sometimes even to the point of genius. The individuality of the artist had not yet been dissolved in the dogmatic thinking of the Church. Intimate biographical details, deep self-analysis and inner spiritual suffering characterize some of the poetic works of the

time like, for example, *The Hymns* of Synesius. The psychological revelations contained in the poetry of Gregory of Nazianzus were echoed in the West in the famous *Confessions* of St. Augustine.

The emergent Christian ideology of the period shows two currents. The aristocratic, which grew out of the heresies, and the monastic which was rooted in the religious and ethical ideas of the people and the poor monks. Monastic ideology found its reflection in such hagiographies as the *Historia Lausiaca* by Palladius and the *Pratum Spirituale* by John Moschus. The Orthodox Church, the dominant classes of the empire, the imperial court, the aristocracy of Constantinople and the higher ranks of the clergy were in favour of taking all the best that ancient culture had given mankind. The Christian theologians, writers and priests turned again and again to Graeco-Roman civilization with its striking simplicity and plasticity of philosophic prose, the meticulous methods of its Neoplatonic dialectics, its Aristotelian logic, its practical psychologism and the clear eloquence of its ancient rhetoric. Gradually there took place a kind of undercover rehabilitation of classical education and ancient literature. In the schools Homer began to be studied along with the Bible. In the early Byzantine period Christian learned literature reached a high degree of sophistication combining the refined elegance of form with the deep spiritualism of content. Byzantine patristic literature had an enormous influence on early medieval theology and philosophy in Western Europe.

Other aesthetic ideals were also being put forward at the same time by the plebeian current in Christian ideology. Nourished in the soil of the ordinary people a number of new literary genres began to appear including the monastic stories and chronicles, church poetry and hagiography. This current willy-nilly brought Christian literature nearer to the people, separating it from that of learned antiquity. This literature increasingly began to reflect the lives of the people as a whole, their spontaneous temperament, their native concepts of the world, their sincerity and emotions and their high moral values. The literature revealed an unexpected combination of mysticism and everyday life, of religious legends and down-to-earth practicalness. This powerful popular current also penetrated liturgical poetry giving rise to new metres which broke away from those of ancient literature and

celebrating new aesthetic ideals imbued with popular spirit.

The 6th century saw the appearance of a great poet, writer of hymns and musician, St. Romanos Melodos, whose ecclesiastical poetry exercised enormous influence on all subsequent Byzantine hymnography.

The 7th century saw the completion of the first stage of Byzantine cultural and ideological development. By this time Christian dogmatics had become finally crystallized and the aesthetic views of Byzantine society had largely formed. The dramatic intensity of the first uneasy centuries of Byzantine history gave way to an ideological calm. The spiritual ideals of contemplative tranquility and moral perfection began to dominate social thought, and everything became, as it were, more rigorous, dryer and more static. The Christologian and Trinitarian disputes which had raged in early Byzantine society, now temporarily abated in submission to a single dogmatic set of religious views. This evolution found its ultimate form in the writings of John of Damascus (late 8th-early 9th century) and Theodore the Studite (9th century).

The cultural life of the empire during this period witnessed the very visible decline of scientific knowledge, the vulgarization and sacralising of literature and fall in the level of education. Ancient traditions temporarily dimmed, yielding to the medieval world outlook. The 8th and 9th centuries saw a certain stabilization in Byzantine culture, for this was the period in which Christian theology was systematized. Theological and philosophical thought ossified and lost its creativity and the works of the theologians and philosophers were made more dogmatic and used only for compilation. Generalizations and classifications were made of what was known in science, theology, philosophy and literature. The process of negating, as it were, ancient culture was nearing completion.

This was accompanied by a strengthening of traditionalism and conservatism in Byzantine cultural life. Idealization of the passed grandeur of the Roman-Byzantine state, glorification of the Romaic kings, the true faith, law and order and the supremacy of centralized Byzantine society over that of the ignorant barbarians found expression in the rigid ceremonials of court etiquette and the magnificent ritual of the Church. The magic ritual was felt

everywhere—at worship, at court, among the embassies and in the private life of society.

In Greek liturgy, poetry, particularly that of Andrew of Crete (7th-8th century), the slow rhythm of religious worship and the majestic serenity of the church hymns somehow fused with the solemn intonation of the church music and the architectural features of the church interior. The harmonious unity achieved between the poetry and the architecture was akin to that created in the Greek theatre of the classical period.

But the fact that the Byzantines were drawn to the past and that their thinking tended to be conservative did not mean that they suffered from any kind of spiritual stagnation, or that they were mentally lazy or impotent. This was their public stand which was made to defend Byzantine society and the Byzantine state. It was clearly expressed in the works of Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople (9th century).

Among other theological works Photius wrote the *Myriobiblion* which contained a large number of extracts from the ancient and early Byzantine authors. This collection is especially valuable for the fact that it preserves many of the works of the ancient writers which would otherwise have been lost.

During the 9th century Byzantium saw a certain upsurge of lay culture and science, particularly in the work of the great Byzantine scholar, Leo the Mathematician, the most prominent natural scientist of his time. His studies in mathematics and mechanics were known not only throughout the empire, but in other lands as well. It was Leo the Mathematician that inspired the founding of the University of Constantinople, at which the "seven liberal arts", as they were called, were studied: grammar, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music.

Lay poetry also thrived during the 9th century, which saw the mature works of Johannus Grammaticus and Ignatius and the deeply sensitive lyrical poetry of the poetess, Casia.

In the 10th century Byzantine culture came to be dominated by concern for the spiritual world. Social thought, art and literature became divorced from reality and looked in a circle of higher, abstract ideas. In its struggle against the ancient world outlook which emphasized the harmony of body and soul and against the dualist heretical teachings that

separated the spiritual and corporeal principles by an unbridgeable abyss, Christianity, while realizing this tragic contradiction of the world, yet tried to sublimate this contradiction. It sought a resolution for the eternal conflict between the spirit and the flesh through reconciliation, through a joining of the unjoinable in which the flesh was bent to the will of the spirit.

Lay culture of the 10th century was characterized by the appearance of a number of encyclopaedic works, particularly on history, agriculture and medicine. The treatises of the emperor, Constantine Porphyrogenitus (913-959), *On the Administration of the Empire*, *On the Themes* and *On the Ceremonies at the Court of Constantinople*, are an encyclopaedia of valuable information on the political and administrative structure of the Byzantine state. They also contain considerable material of an ethnographic, historical and geographical nature on the countries and peoples that were adjacent to the empire including the lands of Rus.

Byzantine literature during this period turned to symbolic lyricism. The dynamics of action was now alien to it. Conflicts were resolved not through the personal development of the hero, but through his sudden spiritual awakening. Elements of the fantastical began to find their way into literature and establish a firm hold there for a long time. Metaphors and allegories became ever more magnificent, but less vital; stories became more grandiose in scope, but further from the intimate life and psychology of people. Characters somehow lost their vitality and reality as can be seen in the poetry of John the Geometres (10th century) and Joannes Tzetzes (12th century).

Byzantine literature, like the entire culture of the period was basically static, inactive and rational. The writer not only does not impinge upon the outside world and not only does not express his own attitude towards it, he does not even try to understand it in all its variety. More often than not he lives in a fictitious, unreal world of rational abstractions, canonized situations and images. Instead of trying to understand man and nature, he is only concerned to embody ideas in an orderly system of symbols. The continual change and movement in the visible world is for him only an illusion, a shell that covers the eternal unchanging essence of all things. Narration is shut within a circle of conven-

tional subjects. The ecclesiastical literature of the time is replete with symbolic, stereotyped heroes; abstract landscapes, metaphysical word-play and tedious phraseological etiquette are predominant. The full-blooded personages and crude popular humour which were so characteristic of early Byzantine lay literature now became increasingly replaced with the incorporeal ascetic figures of martyrs and saints. The canonization and unification of all spiritual life in Byzantium was continually supported by the state and the Church through the strict regimentation of all thinking. Literature was required to be instructional and didactic. The aim of the writer was not to understand nature and life, but to enlighten and save those who wandered in ignorance and sin. There was no need for him to have his own vision of the world.

But the canonization and traditionalizing of Byzantine culture during this period could not completely dim the internal creative spirit of the people or destroy the vital quest for real artistic expression. Sometimes quite unexpectedly touchingly poetic and naively simple images of the ordinary suffering people would break in upon the dry desert of bare abstractions. The pages of Byzantine hagiological literature, like the *Vita Basilii Novi*, the *Vita Mariae Novae*, (10th century) reveal a truly popular picture of a man who was physically weak, but morally clean. Commonly it was a holy fool who suffered the persecution, laughter and scorn of the crowd, who was wretched and at times ridiculous in his helplessness, but who was portrayed by the hagiographers as the chosen of God, who could work miracles and perform feats of virtue. The whole narrative is permeated with a painful sense of real compassion for a man who was so poor, humble and yet so wise in his simplicity. Although this literature immortalized the disharmony that reigned in the world, it at the same time contains the clearly ringing notes of a humanism which was rarely to be found in the moral code of a slave-owning society.

The duality of Byzantine culture with its conflicting aristocratic and popular trends was not erased even when dogmatized ecclesiastical ideology was at its height. But unlike Western Europe which had almost completely lost its ancient classical heritage by the early medieval period, the traditions of Graeco-Roman civilization never died out there and the decline of education was felt to a much lesser degree.

And it was only natural, therefore, that the renaissance of ancient culture in Byzantium began earlier than in the West. However much it may have wanted, medieval Christian Byzantium could never cast off the burden of ancient culture and it returned again and again to this source of knowledge. True, the study of the ancient world in 9th and 10th century Byzantium was more a question of compilation than the application of creative imagination; the 10th century, as we have seen, was an age of encyclopaedias, compendiums and excerpts from the writings of the ancient authors. But gradually the ancient heritage once more began to be used for the development of new aesthetic views in society.

The enormous accumulation of positive knowledge, the slow but steady growth of the natural sciences, the expansion of man's ideas about the Earth and the Universe, the demands of seafaring, trade, diplomacy and jurisprudence and the development of cultural links with Western Europe and the Arab World—all led to an enrichment of Byzantine culture and brought about major changes in the world outlook of Byzantine society.

The 11th and 12th centuries witnessed great changes in Byzantine culture. This period saw the upsurge of scientific knowledge and the emergence of rationalism in social thought. Major thinkers tried, if somewhat inconsistently, to find for the first time a logical foundation for religious dogma. The rationalist tendencies among the Byzantine philosophers and theologians, like those among the West European scholastics of the 10th-12th centuries, appeared primarily in the desire to combine faith with reason and at times to put reason above faith. But unlike West European scholasticism, Byzantine philosophy in the 11th and 12th centuries was based on the teachings of various ancient schools, not just the works of Aristotle. The rationalist currents in Byzantine philosophy were represented primarily by Michael Psellus and Ioannes Italos.

Michael Psellus was a philosopher, historian and poet who combined work in the state civil service with scientific activity. His philosophical treatise, the *Logic*, was widely known throughout Byzantium and the West. Psellus' philosophy was considerably influenced by Plato.

Ioannes Italos, Psellus' pupil, was also a Platonist. He claimed that philosophy and theology were two separate systems, each of which sought truth

independently of the other. Accused of heresy he suffered severe persecution from the Church. The philosophical views of both Psellus and Italos had a certain influence on the development of West European philosophy.

The renaissance of ancient culture in the empire was an important precondition for the development of rationalism in Byzantium. It found expression in the concept of the ancient heritage as a single, integral philosophical and ethical system. The Byzantine thinkers of the 11th and 12 centuries adopted from the ancient philosophers the respect which the latter had for reason. Instead of blind faith based on authority there came the study of causality in nature and society. The rationalist ideas of Byzantine 11th and 12th century philosophy had a noticeable influence on West European scholasticism and medieval philosophical thought as a whole. And in both Byzantium and the West they were harshly persecuted by the Church.

At this time important changes took place in the literature and in the moral and aesthetical views of Byzantine society. During the period when feudalism flourished and there were close political and cultural ties between Byzantium and the West, the lay trends in Byzantine literature flourished and religious indifferentism increased among the feudal nobility and the intelligensia. Bitter satirical works—like those of Christophoros de Mytilene and Michael Psellus—appeared that castigated the vices of the ignorant clergy and the greedy bureaucrats. The monastic ideal of chastity found fewer advocates and began to be replaced by glorification of the simple human joys of earthly love. The development of the courteous chivalrous romance in the West coincided with the appearance in Byzantium of the military tale, the heroic epic and the love story which introduced new real heroes, bold warriors who performed feats of bravery no longer in the name of the aesthetic ideals of salvation, but for the sake of beautiful maidens or for the greater glory of the Byzantine emperors.

In the 10th and 11th centuries the famous Byzantine epic, *The Poem about Digenes Akritas*, was written. This told of a legendary hero, the ideal Byzantine warrior who defended the empire from foreign invasion. The poem was most likely formed on the basis of heroic folk songs that have not come down to us. It reflected the ideology of the provincial military

elite who maintained their independence from the central authorities of the empire. The epic of Digenes was also well-known in ancient Rus, where during the 12th and 13th centuries it existed in a translation into old Russian.

The outstanding poet of the 12th century, Theodore of Prodromos, turned to the love story in his work, *Rodanthe and Dosicles*, which related the dramatic adventures of two young lovers separated by fate. A contemporary, the anonymous author of the dialogue, *Timarion*, wrote in the popular genre of the time of a journey into the underworld. He presented a brilliant satirical picture of contemporary society with its ignorant rulers, learned scholastics and cunning courtiers.

The literature of the 11th and 12th centuries saw a change of genres. The classical lives of the saints were replaced by the lay novels, and the world chronicles by the memoirs and works of historians who described events they had lived through. The genre of historical memoirs was noted for an original work, *Advices and Stories*, written in the 11th century by Kekaumenes, a distinguished Byzantine soldier and member of the provincial nobility. This book which was addressed to his son was designed to guide him through life and reflected the enormous personal experience of its author.

The 11th and 12th centuries were rich in major historical works. Outstanding among which was the *Alexiad* written by the Byzantine princess, Anna Comnena, to glorify the reign of her father, Emperor Alexius I Comnenus (1081-1118). The tragic events connected with the conquest of Byzantium by the Crusaders in 1204 were described in a work by the historian Nicetas Choniates. His *History of Romaics* is not only a serious historical work containing unique information on the Fourth Crusade and the sack of Constantinople, it is also an outstanding work of literature.

During this period rhetoric and epistolography once more appeared as literary genres. And alongside the religious hymns of the Church there arose lay love songs and satirical poetry.

But the new currents appeared not only in the evolution of literary genres, but primarily in the changes that took place in ethical views. Creative poetry changed noticeably. Passive acceptance of the ecclesiastical-dogmatic view of the world became gradually replaced by the conscious

perception of reality on the part of the artist.

Now the man of letters not only saw the whole contradictoriness and complexity of the human soul, but also gave his own evaluation of human behaviour. Whereas the hagiography of preceding decades had presented its characters in black and white terms—they were either totally good or the embodiment of evil, the new heroes of the literary works now became invested with more complex human characteristics. They were no longer painted in contrasting colours, but in tonal shades and thus made more realistic and believable. Heroes were endowed with both virtues and vices; which the writer alternately praised, satirized or castigated. The literary language, too, became richer and more vital with the dead, bookish language of the ancient classics and the Church fathers being replaced by the real language of the people.

All these unquestionably progressive trends in 11th and 12th century Byzantine culture were subsequently developed in the later period of Byzantine's history. But they continued to come up against the most desperate resistance from the Church ideologists. The culture of later Byzantium has the seal of tired greatness. At a time when the once powerful empire encircled by enemies abroad and shaken by social upheavals within was being tragically brought to its knees, a clear polarization of the two main trends in Byzantine ideology occurred.

Even during the worst period of foreign invasion the hearths of culture were preserved in Byzantium, living thought survived and new ideas matured which on occasion were so far ahead of their times as to anticipate the age of humanism.

In the 14th and 15th centuries there appeared a whole constellation of Byzantine scholars, humanists and erudite persons including Theodore Metochites, Nicephore Gregoras and Georgius Gemistus Pletho.

To the pen of Theodore Metochites belong a large number of works on various literary, philosophical and moralistic themes. An ardent admirer and connoisseur of ancient culture, he did much to revive the study of the classical past in Byzantium. His name was also connected with the study of Byzantine painting, since he ordered the famous mosaics which adorn the Chora Monastery (Kariye Djami) in Constantinople.

The philosopher and theologian, Nicephore Gregoras, left for posterity an extensive historical work full of valuable information. But pride of place among these scholars must unquestionably be given to Georgian Gemistus Pletho.

Pletho was the most outstanding philosopher, thinker and religious reformer in later Byzantium. A follower of Plato, he strongly opposed Aristotle as exploited by the Christian Church. Pletho advocated replacing the Christian religion with a reformed paganism. Although the bold, albeit utopian, philosophical and religious system he proposed—which strove not only to create a new pagan pantheistic religion, but also to revive in Byzantium Plato's ideal state—was doomed to failure, it left an appreciable mark on the development of human thought.

In Plato's state Pletho saw not an ideal abstract state but the real state of Byzantium reformed on a new social basis in which both the rich and the poor would work together in harmony protected by the armies of the empire and guided by the wisdom of philosophers. There once again under imperial protection craft and trade would flourish and a national regular army would be formed capable of defending the empire. The political doctrine of Pletho sowed the seeds for the real national states that were subsequently to appear in Europe.

The late period in the history of Byzantium saw a great number of outstanding erudite persons. The encyclopaedic learning of the great Byzantine philosophers, theologians, philologists and orators like Demetrius Cydones, Manuel Chrysoloras, John Bessarion of Nicaea aroused the unlimited admiration of the Italian humanists many of whom were pupils and followers of the Byzantine scholars. In the historiography (the works of Laonicus Chalcondyles, Constantine Ducas and Sphrantzes) and lay literature of the late period humanist ideas—interest in people as individuals, in nature and in views and attitudes—are clearly to be seen. Alongside the Biblical concept of history there appear new historical and philosophical theories, particularly the theory that world monarchies change according to a law-governed process. At the same time appreciable progress was made in the exact and natural sciences, particularly mathematics and medicine.

During the 15th century ideological ties between the Byzantine scholars and the Italian scientists,

writers and poets became closer with the result that they began to exert greater influence on the formation of early Italian humanism. It was these Byzantine scholars who were fated to reveal to the Western humanists the beautiful world of Graeco-Roman antiquity, acquaint them with classical literature and make them aware of the original philosophies of Plato and Aristotle.

The dynasty of the Palaeologi saw the flourishing of the chivalrous romance. Eumathius Macrembolites wrote a romance in the 12th century entitled *The Story of Hysmine and Hysminias* which in allegorical form described the love adventures of the two heroes. From the 13th to the 15th century a number of romances in verse appeared including *Callimachus and Chrysorrhoe*, *Belthrandos and Chrysantza*, *Lybistrus and Rodamne*. Against a background of enticing romantic adventure these romances glorified the human emotions, true love, the all-conquering power of female beauty and the grandeur of nature and dealt with the eternal problems of fate, destiny, life and death.

The 14th and 15th centuries were marked by the appearance of a number of outstanding folk works. Quite a few epigrams and parodies, often bitterly satirical and anticlerical, have come down to us. Short stories were widely popular on both mythical and everyday themes as were fables about animals. The 14th century satirical novel *Pulologus* made fun of many of the people to be found in Byzantine society, while the didactic novel *The Story about Quadrupeds* described the eternal battle between the predatory and the herbivorous animals.

But alongside the appearance of humanist ideas in late Byzantium there occurred an unprecedented upsurge in mysticism. It was as if all the temporarily concealed forces of spiritualism and mysticism, asceticism and seclusion were at once consolidated in the Hesychast movement and had begun an offensive against the ideals of the Renaissance.

In the atmosphere of ideological hopelessness which was caused by the ever-present threat of military destruction combined with internecine strife among the feudal lords and the defeat of the popular movement there emerged among the Byzantine clergy and in the monasteries the desire to find salvation from earthly ills in a world of passive contemplation and tranquility—*hesychia*, as it was called, or in mystical ecstasy which offered oneness with the

divinity and divine revelation. Supported by the Church and the feudal nobility the teaching of the Hesychasts was successful in winning over the masses of the people to these mystic ideas. The most prominent representative of this trend was the Byzantine philosopher Gregorius Palamas (late 13th-mid-14th centuries) and he was opposed by the scholar and philosopher, Barlaam of Calabria, who led the rational movement in philosophy. But with the aid of the higher clergy and the monks Palamas was victorious over the opponent.

The victory of the Hesychasts was in many ways fateful for the cultural development of Byzantium, if not for the whole Byzantine state. It crushed the beginnings of humanist ideas in literature and the arts and weakened the resistance of the popular masses in their struggle against foreign invasion. The mystical ideas of Hesychasm remained highly tenacious even after the fall of Byzantium, penetrating far beyond the empire into the countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe.

But the progressive ideas of the Byzantine thinkers, those ardent admirers of ancient culture did not disappear without trace, but were transferred to Western Europe where they continued to develop and fertilize the culture of the Renaissance.

Byzantine art can also lay claim to an important place in world culture. Medieval Europe is obliged to Byzantium for the creation of an artistic style that in terms of emotional impact and elegant sophistication was totally unique.

Byzantine art is genetically related to the art of the Hellenistic and Eastern Christian worlds. Its early period reveals a confluence of the refined plasticity and delicate sensitivity of late antique impressionism with the naive and at times crude expressiveness of Eastern popular art. For a long time Hellenism remained the main, but not the only source, of artistic technique for the Byzantine masters. Here they learned elegance of form, correctness of proportion and that enchanting ability to convey translucence to their colour spectrum. But Hellenism could not, of course, fully withstand the powerful flood of Eastern influences that swept over Byzantium in the first centuries of its history, when the art of Egypt, Syria, Asia Minor and Persia made their impact on the empire.

In the 4th and 5th centuries the traditions of late antiquity were still strong in Byzantine art. Whereas

classical art was characterized by pacified monism and knew no conflict between the spirit and the flesh, since its aesthetic ideal was the harmonious unity of bodily and spiritual beauty, the art of late antiquity began to reveal the tragic dualist conflict between the two. The harmony of monism gave way to the conflict of opposing fundamentals, the spirit tried to cast off its corporate bonds. This dualist conflict resulted in late antique art in pagan sensualism being combined with tremendous spiritual tension.

In the early stages Byzantine aesthetics absorbed from the aesthetics of late antiquity a kind of philosophical spiritualism in much the same way as the Eastern Christian religion had adopted elements of mysticism from Neoplatonic philosophy. Subsequently Byzantine art overcame the conflict between body and soul offering in its place the tranquil contemplation that was capable of taking man away from the storms of earthly life and into the supernatural world of pure spirit. This "appeasement" was the result of recognizing the primacy of the spiritual over the corporeal, or in other words, the victory of the spirit over the flesh. The basic aesthetic objective facing Byzantine art then became the desire of the artist to embody in an artistic image the transcendental idea. This was a natural result of the great changes that took place in social relations of all kinds and in the ideology of the Byzantine empire: the sensualist aesthetics of antiquity was no longer in line with the requirements of the dominant class and the Orthodox Church of Byzantium and was gradually ousted by the spiritualist ideas of the Middle Ages.

In the 6th and 7th centuries the Byzantine artists not only absorbed these various influences, but were able to transcend them to produce their own original style. Henceforth Constantinople became famed for its art throughout the medieval world, the "palladium of science and arts". Subsequently other Byzantine cities like Nicaea, Athens, Trebizond, Mistra, and Athos also became artistic centres.

Having developed in the imperial and aristocratic milieu of the empire's capital with its autocratic power and influential Orthodox Church, Byzantine art fully reflected the main features of the Christian outlook and embodied its aesthetic ideals. Henceforth Hellenistic pagan anthropomorphism acquired completely different ideological content:

art became imbued with the philosophical ideas of Eastern Christianity and the aesthetics of the Byzantine masters became organically linked with the religious world outlook.

The flourishing of Byzantine art during the early period came as a result of the strengthening of the might of the empire under Justinian. Magnificent palaces and churches were built in Constantinople including the Church of St. Sophia, an unsurpassable masterpiece of Byzantine architecture which was built in the 6th century by Anthemius of Tralles and Isidor of Miletus. They were the first to embody the idea of a grandiose centric church surmounted by a cupola. The interior of the church was of astounding beauty and magnificence: high above "soared" an enormous cupola surrounded at the base by 40 windows from which flowed streams of light. The gleam of the coloured marble columns, the flashing gold of the mosaics and precious ornaments and the radiance of a myriad lamps gave the illusion of unlimited space and made the interior of the church a symbolic microcosm of the Universe. The Church of St. Sophia was rightly called Great and remained the holiest place in Byzantium.

The 6th century also saw the creation of other architectural masterpieces—the Church of St. Irene in Constantinople, the Church of St. Vitalian in Ravenna and the Church of St. Demetrius in Thessalonika. The Church of St. Vitalian in Ravenna is a work of astounding elegance and architectural sophistication. It is particularly renowned for its remarkable mosaics both ecclesiastical and lay. The apse is decorated with magnificent mosaic representations of the Emperor Justinian and the Empress Theodora surrounded by the higher clergy, the courtiers and the ladies-in-waiting. The faces of Justinian and Theodora and their entourage are given individual portrait-style characteristics, and the colours are bright, warm and fresh, although the figures of the composition are somewhat static.

In the subsequent period Byzantine art evolved even stronger. The white marble pagan temples of ancient Hellas shining in the sun and forming part of the surrounding countryside gave way to the outwardly modest basilicas whose main charm consisted in their internal decoration. In the semi-darkness of their vaults a myriad candles and lamps would glow illuminating in mysterious reflections the gold of the mosaics, the dark faces of the icons,

the coloured marble of the colonnades and the magnificent precious ornaments. The statues of the ancient gods and heroes that stood so fine in their manly plasticity were cast out forever to be replaced by ascetic images of Christian saints who embodied against a background of the glimmering gold icons the incorporeal ideal of Christian humility.

More and more, Byzantine art took on an extratemporal and extraspatial character. The abstract gold background that replaced real three-dimensional space and was so beloved of the artists fulfilled an important aesthetic function. It isolated, as it were, the subjects of a picture from the reality of the world around. Magnificent monumentalism became increasingly combined with complicated symbolism. The triumph of the spiritual in aesthetics resulted in all the varied phenomena of the real world being dissolved in symbolism and the artist trying to free himself from what he considered superfluous and tiresome details that did not, in his opinion, reveal the main idea of the work. Backgrounds would consist of abstract architectural ensembles and fantastical landscapes or, to make them even more impersonal, of gold or purple planes. A strict rational symmetry began to prevail in art and architecture together with a solemn and stately balance of line and movement among the human figures depicted on the frescoes and mosaics of the churches. Luxuriant ornamentation was everywhere present. Works of art began to take on an impersonal character as the creative process became rigidly controlled by the Church and all attempts at individual expression on the part of the artist became subject to the levelling effect of the canon.

Religious worship, which in Byzantium had become closer to the celebration of a divine mystery, should have been capable, in the opinion of the Church, of eclipsing the emotional elation of ancient tragedy, or the healthy gaiety of the mimes, or the excitement of the circuses and giving the people a feeling of joy amid the dim drudgery of their everyday lives. But since these hopes were far from always being realized and the simple joys of life took preference over the preaching of asceticism, the Church was particularly insistent to use the magical power of art as an ideological influence over the masses.

But the deep spiritualism that lay behind the aes-

thetic views of the Byzantine aristocracy did not succeed in totally dragging Byzantine art into a world of naked abstraction. Unlike the Islamic East, where the primacy of the spiritual over the corporeal resulted in the predominance of geometrism and ornamental forms and the exclusion of human representation, in Byzantine art man still remained central to artistic creation. This was primarily due to the strong traditions of Greek anthropomorphism, which remained extremely tenacious among various groups in Byzantine society.

At the same time the Eastern Christian religion accorded an important place to the doctrine of the Incarnation according to which the Son of God assumed bodily form to accomplish man's salvation. This dogma as it were, rehabilitated man himself, reconciling religion with man's corporeal nature. The wave of abstract art from Islam during the period of iconoclasm threatened to overwhelm Byzantium, but Greek anthropomorphism not only withstood it but even triumphed.

Byzantine art was given fresh impetus in the 9th and 10th centuries during the period of the Macedonian Renaissance, which came as a result of the strengthening of the empire under the rule of the Macedonian dynasty.

The 9th and 10th centuries saw the final formation of the cruciform type of Byzantine churches, which became widespread in the capital and throughout the empire. During the 9th century also a number of masterpieces in mosaic were created in the Church of St. Sophia in Constantinople. These were characterized by a combination of powerful classical elements and the new spiritualist art. The face of the Virgin Mother sitting with the Christ-child in her arms on the apse of the Church of St. Sophia is full of classical sensuality but contains at the same time deep spirituality. The numerous mosaics in the Church of St. Sophia bear a ritualistic character and symbolize the unity of power of the monarch and the Church.

In the late 9th and 10th centuries the canons of icon-painting were formulated. These were strict rules governing the pictorial representation of all saints and religious scenes and included a fixed canon on the representation of man.

Whereas the pagan world had glorified corporeal beauty, Byzantine art's concern was with spiritual greatness and ascetic purity. On the murals, mosaics

and icons and even in miniature paintings in books the head as the concentration of spiritual life was made the dominant feature of the human body. The body itself was shamefully hidden away under the streaming folds of robes. Linear rhythm replaced sensual expression.

Of paramount importance in the representation of the human face was the need to convey its spirituality, its intense contemplativeness, its inner grandeur, the depth of its spiritual experiences and a fixed gaze that would somehow bewitch the viewer. A high forehead and thin ascetic lips were the characteristic features of the portraits produced by the Byzantine artists in the classical medieval period.

This impression of passive contemplativeness and austerity was achieved also by the special use of colour. Instead of the impressionism employed by the painters of later antiquity with its subtle use of delicate pastel shades, the practice was introduced during the 10th century of using dense local colour superimposed with decorative blocks of purples, lilacs, blues, olive-greens and whites. From this time onwards colour was thought of as concentrated light and the artist's task was not the reproduction of real tones, but the creation of abstract colour spectra. The image of man was finally frozen in magnificent aloofness and deprived of dynamism, personifying ascetic tranquility.

Thus the predominance of the religious worldview and spiritualist aesthetics in Byzantine society which were engendered by the social relations of the Middle Ages made the appearance of any realistic trend in Byzantine art impossible. The retention of Hellenistic traditions, however, prevented the human image from being completely dematerialized. The use of Hellenistic illusionist techniques stopped the figures from being made two-dimensional, while the restoration of the ancient system of proportions impeded the dissolution of the human image into abstract symbolism or geometrical ornament. However, certain materialistic features in the depiction of man and the real world at times emerge, albeit timorously, from the depths of popular creativity.

From the 10th century Byzantine refined art became increasingly controlled and regimented by the Church and the state. Its thematics and iconography were made subject to fixed canons, and any

kind of innovation in subject matter was banned. Byzantine art seemed to stagnate in the proud magnificence of its unchanging perfection.

The 11th and early 12th centuries were renowned for the creation of a number of outstanding artistic monuments not only in Constantinople, but throughout the whole of the empire, particularly in Greece. Prominent among these for their architectural originality, their craftsmanship and the artistic power of their frescoes and mosaics are the Church of the Hosios Lukas Monastery in Phocide, the Nea Moni Monastery on Chios and the Church of the Monastery of Daphni near Athens.

Whereas the Church of Hosios Lukas is renowned for the heavy monumental style of its architectural forms and the splendour of its internal ornamentation, the Nea Moni and the Daphni are astounding for the nobility of their elongated proportions which give the buildings unusual beauty and lightness. The paintings of the period are characterized by strictness of line coupled with powerful expressiveness in the stern faces of the saints and somewhat dark colours.

The contradictory nature of social relations in later Byzantium, the weak development of pre-capitalism and the ideological struggle that took place in the empire and ended in victory for the mystics meant that the new direction in art that had emerged there and that was to a certain extent akin to the early Italian Renaissance never reached its culmination. It is true that during the Palaeologos period (13th-14th century) certain humanist tendencies were to be seen. A more picturesque style was developed and art showed greater dynamism with gesticulations being more impetuous and expressive, garments more billowy, movement more free and perspectives more bold. At the same time iconography became more complicated with certain representations approximating to genre scenes of an intimate and at times sentimental nature. Human figures merged into fantastic landscapes, became smaller and lost their former vastness and immobility, while colours became softer and brighter. These new characteristics of Byzantine painting found their fullest and most complete form in the 14th century frescoes and mosaics in the Chora Monastery in Constantinople (Kariye Djami). And closest to these in their expressiveness, the force of their emotional impact and the brightness of their

colours are the murals on the churches of Mistra in Peloponnesos [the Church of St. Demetrius and Peribleptos (14th century) and the Monastery of Pantanassa (15th century)].

Nevertheless, Byzantine art as a whole stopped at the threshold of the Renaissance without crossing the line that divided medieval spiritualist art from the full-blooded, realistic art of the Renaissance.

Late Byzantine art remains very far from realism. It stays true to the spiritualist traditions and largely looks back to the past. Human figures never took on three-dimensional, corporeal qualities, blocks of colour were never replaced by the play of light and shade, while fantastical background ornamentation is never superseded by the interior. Furthermore, in the last decades of the Byzantine empire art, like all other aspects of ideological life, once more saw the complete triumph of reactionary mystical principles; in painting, dryness, a linear graphicness prevail over the richness and colourfulness of some of the best works of the Palaeologos Renaissance; one witnesses the return to static art after the dynamic expressiveness of the earlier period. The splendid summer of the Palaeologos Renaissance turned out to be short-lived and the delicate flower of pre-Renaissance art that bloomed on the soil of Mistra and at the Kariye Djami soon faded under the cold winds of ascetic hesychasm and the canonized aestheticism of the Church. On the eve of the empire's fall Byzantine art finally froze in its faded grandeur. The binding influence of traditionalism impeded the self-development of Byzantine art and was perhaps one of the reasons why it never rose to the heights of the West European Renaissance.

At the same time the unusual stability of the Byzantine style to some extent assured its extensive penetration into and long influence upon the various countries and peoples that bordered on the empire. The universal character of art at Constantinople resulted in many of the various national schools of art like the Coptic, the Syrian, the Armenian, the Georgian, the Serbian, the Bulgarian and the Latin being to a certain degree assimilated, although at the same time Byzantine art itself was subject to the counter-influence of the various local schools, particularly their aesthetics, their individual perception of the world and their special artistic techniques.

The influence of Byzantine culture on other countries. Byzantine culture spread extensively beyond the bounds of its own empire. Many neighbouring peoples experienced the attraction of the deeply spiritual and ideologically purposeful art of Constantinople, which for many centuries remained the arbiter of artistic fashion and herald of refined taste. It was therefore hardly surprising that here from the castles of sunny Sicily, from the mountain monasteries of the Caucasus and the Balkans, from the snowy plains of Ancient Rus, from all over the known world men of artistic talent gathered to learn the secrets of the Byzantine painters, mosaic builders, architects and jewelers and to master the nobility of form and sophistication of colour that was Byzantine art. It was also only to be expected that the most powerful rulers of Europe tried to entice the Greek masters from Constantinople to build for them churches and palaces.

The successful expansion of Byzantine art was in no small degree due to its social and ideological orientation. The court nobility and church hierarchy in such feudal societies as existed in southern Italy, Sicily, Rome, Venice, the Adriatic, parts of Serbia and Bulgaria, or among the mountain principalities of Georgia and Armenia, or in the far-off Russian cities of Kiev, Vladimir, Novgorod and Moscow willingly accepted Byzantine art since it was aristocratic in spirit and conformed to their own social needs and religious and aesthetic ideals. Its influence, as that of Byzantine civilization as a whole, was most intensively felt in precisely those social environments which were most akin to that of Constantinople and in those countries where social development had progressed along similar lines to that of Byzantium.

Among the people of those countries which bordered on the Byzantine empire the influence of this aristocratic art was, naturally, less intense. The popular masses of these countries were more often influenced by those elements of art of the empire's local schools which were more democratic and earthly in character. Hence the well-known dual influence of Byzantine art on the other countries of Europe, an influence, however, in which the orthodox school of the capital remained predominant.

The seeds of Byzantine artistic influence, while falling upon the soil of local original creativity, tend-

ed to yield an abundant harvest. But in some regions like Sicily, southern Italy, the Balkans, the Caucasus and Ancient Rus, where national artistic forms and aesthetic views were already firmly established, this influence was subjected to considerable reworking.

The ancient Russian masters are justly regarded as the wise and frugal heirs to the finest traditions of Byzantine art. They not only preserved the highest cultural values created by the Byzantines but multiplied them through combining this wealth with the creative genius of the Russian people, adding to it their own life-asserting optimism, sincere mildness, compassion for the ordinary man and all-embracing humanism.

Byzantine civilization had a deep and frequently stabilizing influence on the cultural development of many medieval European countries. The spread of its influence was extensive including Sicily, southern Italy, Dalmatia, the Balkans, Ancient Rus, Transcaucasia, the Northern Caucasus and the Crimea. This influence, of course, was naturally the greater in those countries where the Orthodox Church with its stable ties with Constantinople was firmly established.

Byzantine influence was felt in religion, philosophy, social thought, cosmogony, written languages, education, political ideas and law. It entered into all the arts—literature, architecture, painting and music. Byzantium transmitted the ancient and Hellenistic heritage and cultural values that came not only from Greece, but from Egypt, Syria, Palestine and Italy. The influence of Byzantine culture in the Middle Ages was in many respects a continuation of the spread of the cultural traditions of the Graeco-Roman and Eastern Hellenistic worlds to the countries of South-East and Eastern Europe.

The elements of Byzantine civilization that penetrated Bulgaria, Serbia, Georgia, Armenia and Ancient Rus aided the further progressive development of feudal society in these states, did much to meet their domestic needs and increased their international prestige. For the ruling feudal classes in these countries they were an appeal to all that was best and most refined in the cultural values of medieval Europe.

For Byzantium the spreading of its cultural influence to neighbouring countries had a definite pur-

pose—the desire to bring these states under the ecclesiastical and political control of the empire. The scale of Byzantine cultural influence, of course, must be neither exaggerated nor underestimated. Its level of intensity varied from country to country. In some cases it was long and became a part of local culture; in others it was more superficial, nothing more than a thin veneer over the local culture.

In general, the degree to which Byzantine influence was effective depended not upon the Byzantine state or the Orthodox Church, but on the level of development of the pre-Christian popular culture. The higher this level and the more stable the traditions of pagan folk art, the more limited was the influence of Byzantine civilization.

The strongest Byzantine influence was naturally in the sphere of ecclesiastical ideology, canon law, liturgy, service books, hymnography, religious music and religious fine art. It was somewhat weaker in the sphere of lay culture, although translations of Byzantine lay literature together with hagiography and religious poetry were known in many countries of South-East and Eastern Europe. The role of Byzantium was, of course, great in the development and improvement of Slavonic written languages.

Even more important was the fact that once these Byzantine cultural values had been brought to foreign lands, they frequently underwent a deep transformation to begin, as it were, a new life with completely new features through the influence of the local national cultures. The influence of the aristocratic feudal culture of Byzantium was, of course, considerably greater on the upper strata of society in the neighbouring countries. The princes and feudal lords of South-East and Eastern Europe not infrequently, as we have seen, adopted Byzantine court etiquette as well as some of the customs and habits of the refined Byzantine nobility. Byzantine cultural influence of the lower orders of society was, however, considerably less. But despite opposition from the rulers and the church hierarchy various forms of forbidden literature made their way secretly out of the empire. This included heretical literature, apocrypha, democratic in their spirit, satirical anticlerical books, which helped in their turn the development of free-thinking in those countries which came within the Byzantine sphere of influence.

Parallel to the spread of Byzantine culture to the countries of South-East, Eastern and Western Europe a reverse process also occurred whereby the cultures of these countries influenced the formation of the social and aesthetic ideals of Byzantium itself. The Southern Slavs, the Russians, the Armenians, the Georgians and many other peoples played no small role in both the political and the ideological

life of Byzantium, enriching Byzantine culture with their own artistic traditions.

Byzantium's thousand-year history was full of outstanding events of both social and cultural significance, and it rightly has a prominent place in the progressive development of human society. For this reason Byzantium is still of great interest for us today.

Chapter III

Russia in the Middle Ages

The historical preconditions for the formation of the Ancient Russian State. In the ancient slave-owning world where the centres of European culture were concentrated in Greece and the Roman Empire, the life of human society depended much more than now on the climatic and other natural conditions. Therefore the formation of states among the peoples who inhabited what is now the Soviet Union began in the warmer climes of the south. In the harsh north this process took much longer. Clear evidence of the changing cultures had been found in burial mounds and ruins of fortresses, in the names of rivers and natural features, in articles wrought out of bronze, silver and gold, and in barely legible writings etched on stone or written in manuscripts that have petrified with age and threaten to crumble into ashes at the slightest touch.

The imagination is astounded at the sight of Scythian gold ware in the Hermitage Museum in Leningrad, or of the ancient manuscripts in the Matenadaran depository in Yerevan or of the monuments of Old Nissa (near Ashkhabad), the capital of the Parthian Kingdom.

In the thousand years that had elapsed from the ancient kingdom of Urartu (9th century B.C.) on Lake Van to the beginnings of the Kiev-and-Novgorod state (9th century A.D.) many rulers had come and gone throughout Central Asia and the Caucasus—Persians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Byzantines, and many kingdoms like Colchis or the Kush Empire had waxed and waned.

From the 4th century B.C. to the 1st century

A.D. Greek colonists built towns, cities and even small kingdoms like Olbia, Bosphorus and Chersonesus on the shores of the Black Sea. The Roman Empire tried to encircle the Black Sea with its own dominions from the Danube in the West to Colchis and the Crimea in the East. But all these states and dominions were short-lived and did not outlast the slave-owning system that had engendered them. For centuries the poetry and mythology of antiquity preserved stories of the expedition of the Argonauts to Colchis in search of the golden fleece, of Prometheus chained to a rock in the Caucasus, of Iphigenia in Tauris.

The ancient colonization spread north along the Bug and the Dnieper for at least 300 kilometres but did not go beyond the forest-and-steppe regions. A large number of the towns and cities founded by the Greeks (which frequently changed their population) still existed in the Middle Ages and some like Sebastopol, Pantikapaeum (Kerch), and Kerkinatis (Evpatoria) exist today. The complex ethnogenesis of the East Slavs, the formation of the Old Russian nation and the role of the peoples who inhabited what is now the Soviet Union in the history of the ancient world are subjects that today are being given the closest attention.

The Black Sea steppes saw wave upon wave of nomadic tribes moving across from the depths of Asia and Siberia. They were either Iranian like the Sarmatians, the Scythians and the Alans, or Turkic nomads like the Huns, the Khazars and the Bulgars, or Finno-Ugrian like the Hungarians. The Bulgars and the Hungarians passed through these lands be-

fore settling in the lands beyond the Danube.

Archaeologists (from details of clothing and ornaments) and philologists (from analysing the names of rivers, lakes and settlements) have come to the conclusion that during this pre-state period the European region of the USSR was gradually opened up and the main role in this process was played by the Slav land-tiller. Furthermore, comparative linguistic studies have shown that certain ancient Indoeuropean legal norms were common to all the Slavs. That was basically peaceful settlement and interaction which brought farming to the less developed peoples that had hitherto lived by nomadic cattle breeding, hunting and fishing.

Therefore, when the Ancient Russian State was formed from an amalgamation of East Slav tribes, it inherited the rich cultural traditions of both settled and nomadic peoples who replaced one another over the centuries in Eurasia, and took a leading place among other such states like the Khazar (7th century), the Bulgar (9th-10th centuries) and the Lithuanian (13th century) that existed in the European part of what is today the Soviet Union. The Ancient Russian State had developed by the 10th century when first the Dnieper Polyanye, the Ilmen Slovenye and the Polotsk Krivichi, and then all fourteen East Slav tribes joined forces under the leadership of the grand princes and boyars of Kiev, the "Mother of Russian Cities". This enormous state stretched from the Black Sea steppes to the Arctic Ocean and from the Western Dvina and the Danube to the Volga.

During the three and a half centuries of the existence of Ancient Rus as an independent state, i.e. up until the invasion of the Mongol-Tatars, enormous changes took place in the world. Scandinavian-English alliances prompted by the Vikings were made and broken leaving ineffaceable traces in England, Northern France and Southern Italy; the Byzantine Empire waxed and waned; the Arab rule which was directed against Europe from Baghdad and Cordoba collapsed and the Arabs themselves became victims of the Crusades; Germany transferred her borders from the Elbe to the Oder and then with increased pressure on the East went beyond the Vistula, the Niemen and the Western Dvina; waves of nomads—Hungarians, Pechenegs, Turks and Polovtsi passed around the Black Sea and went on into the hinterland of Europe; and

Slav states developed and strengthened, and Rus, the biggest among them, played a prominent role in all these events.

But Rus itself did not remain unchanged.

At the first stage, while Rus had hardly had time to enter on to the international arena, she achieved political unity at home. Yet she was entangled in a number of political and economic obligations assumed by the East Slav lands that she was working to unite. The unification of these lands of Upper (Novgorod) and Lower (Kievan) Rus and the formation of state boundaries took place amid sharp conflict with neighbouring states and lands. The borders that were established at that time and the alliances that were formed were destined to last the test of time and to a certain extent to survive to the present day. This was a time of expeditions against both neighbouring and far-off lands in search of tribute, prisoners and favourable trading agreements for furs, wax, and slaves in exchange for items of luxury. It was a time, as an ancient chronicle said, when "ancient princes and their men won back Russian lands and extended their power to other countries".

At the second stage of its development Rus entered a period of political fragmentation and her unity came to an end. A group of feudal lords came to power who saw their prime source of enrichment to come from within Rus itself and the foreign lands that were subject to her, and they were not only reluctant to take their peasants away from the fields for the sake of far-off expeditions, but even on occasion for the purpose of defending their own country from nomadic invasion, especially if it did not threaten their own lands. Long expeditions abroad came to an end. The borders of the country became stabilized, and within these borders there were more than twenty peoples subjected to Rus.

In Rus as in the other major states of Europe opposition developed between the princes and the bishops and between different cities that were tied politically to warring foreign powers which in their turn were not infrequently torn apart by strife between the rulers and their vassals. This meant an end to the unity of the country's foreign policy. Its relations with other countries grew extremely complicated. Nevertheless, a number of alliances did remain, particularly those that were opposed to the expansionist aspirations of Byzantium, the German

Empire and Papal universalism. The Mongol-Tatar invasion undermined the international importance of Rus and for a long time to come she lost a considerable part of her foreign policy prerogatives.

The Origins of Russia. How did Ancient Rus arise? The Kiev court chronicler of the 12th century recognized only one power—that of the prince, and with this he identified the state. Remembering the Scandinavian origins of the royal dynasty, he based the history of the formation of the Russian state on the story that the Slav tribes had called upon Rurik, a Scandinavian prince, to rule over them.

Historians have long been concerned with the question as to the origins of the Ancient Russian State. Did it arise through the development of the Slavs themselves or through the beneficial influence of the Scandinavian dynasty? Unfortunately, debates on the relations between the Slav world and the Scandinavians have for a long time been conducted according to the formula: either—or. And they have been further complicated by ideas about the Northmen's invasion of Russia on the one hand, and the complete denial of their role in its history on the other.

What is our knowledge about the level of social life among the early Slavs?

The first pages of Ancient Rus' history are buried in the earth and could only be read by archaeologists. As they tear away the age-old layers of earth (there are about 200 different excavations being carried out annually in Russia today) they reveal the past that existed before the age of writing and thereby extend the historical traditions of the people. Archaeologists have revealed to us the Slav world and we can now see its troubled life—the crisis of the patriarchal-communal system, the upset harmony of primitive equality, the formation of a stratum of those that were better off; and all this was naturally associated with the social changes that ultimately gave rise to the Ancient Russian State.

What is this conclusion based on? In the deeper layers of the excavations fortified patriarchal settlements for large families of between 50 and 60 people have been found. These family settlements collectively farmed the land cleared by cutting and burning woods and were known in the early chronicles by the name *dym* (smoke). They consisted of small wooden huts, a large house for local meetings and

clan burial vaults. All the property was common and all were equal. Several centuries later, at the end of the first millennium A. D. a different picture faces the archaeologists. Now the settlements ploughed their fields and raised cattle. They used iron farming implements and a potter's wheel for making pottery. Villages now appear without fortifications. The family changes too—throughout almost the whole of the European plain burial mounds appear for one or two persons only. Small family households referred to in the chronicles as *ralo* gradually become prevalent. *Verus* (communities) mentioned in the *Russkaya Pravda* (*Russian Law*) (11th century), were comprised of such families. Property equality disappears (as do common burial mounds within the settlement) and new dwelling places for the rich are built outside it.

On the basis of descriptions of similar processes among other nations at an analogous stage of development, scholars explain the distinctive changes that had taken place by the fact that iron tools were more productive, while the soil, natural conditions and size of families varied. Some became richer, some poorer. More and more both implements and land became privately owned. Captives ceased to be killed or sold, and were left to till the soil. With iron implements they could produce more than it cost to keep them. Some of the farmers either by virtue of their wealth or of their prowess in battle, began to head villages, then groups of villages (*volosts*) in the tribal lands. The life of a village, *volost*, tribe or a union of tribes needed new institutions of government, power and coercion, particularly at a time when internecine wars were rife and clashes with Khazars or Northmen frequent. And so the headman was still close to the villagers, the *volost* governor (*voivode*) was farther away, while the prince of the tribe was worlds away from them. It was a question of time as to how long it would take one of the princes to gain enough land, fortifications and armed force to consolidate hereditary power and begin subduing his neighbours. In this way a new ruling elite was formed, calling itself "elders", "knights" or "nobility".

That this picture is not the product of historians' imagination can be proved by the chronicles. Furthermore, the chronicles attest to the fact that what they described as tribes were political, rather than ethnic formations. The Polyanye, the Drevlyanye,

the Dregovichs and other principalities including the Slovenye and the Krivichi who took part in "inviting" the Varangian Rurik dynasty, were all pagans. They worshipped the forces of nature, sacrificing to Dazhd, the god of the sun, Veles, the god of cattle and trade, Svarog, the god of fire and crafts, and Perun, the god of thunder and war. By sacrificing the best furs, cattle and slaves that they had, they hoped to stay alive and have enough to live on.

They had their own laws, they made sure they had sufficient tribute collected in furs and money from the large (*dym*) and the smaller (*rado*) households, and they conducted trade with other peoples. It is significant that the notation of the Russian lands as "tribes" occurs in the 12th-14th-century chronicles, i.e. at a time when there was no doubt as to the rule of the state.

The elementary social structure the prince-the people was no longer typical of the Slav "tribes", for alongside the prince the chronicler repeatedly mentions the nobility (*muzhi*), who originated in the villages. Later, in the 12th and 13th centuries this social stratum also appeared, as is well described in the chronicles, among neighbouring East European tribes like the Pomoryane, the Prussians, the Lithuanians, the Latvians and the Estonians. All important matters were decided by the nobility and the prince and then brought before the popular assembly (*veche*) for approval. These princes—we know besides the Polyano-Kievan princes also of the prince of the Drevlyanye, Mala, and the prince of the Vyatichi, Khodota—passed on their power by heredity. A prince's lands and estates had clearly defined borders and their violation meant war. The tendency to rapprochement between some of the principalities and the isolation of others together with the invasions of the Khazars from the Volga and the Northmen from the sea resulted in both clashes and alliances, and even in the invitation of foreign mercenaries as frequently happened later, after the formation of the Ancient Russian State. Consequently, the structure of pre-feudal Rus was like a federation or (if allowance is made for the supreme power of the priesthood) a confederation of principalities. The nobility in the individual principalities did not as yet form a single feudal estate in Ancient Rus, but often organized alliances.

This is why when we now read in the chronicles

that having driven off the foreign invaders, the Varangians, the Slavs fell into strife amongst themselves and the Slovenye, Krivichi and Chudiny (Estonians) set out to find a prince who would "judge them righteously" and bring order to the country, we can be sure that this was nothing other than a decision from the noble councils of several large principalities (these should not, of course, be confused with the principalities of the period of political fragmentation). Consequently, it was not the Varangians who brought princely power to Rus or divided society into the rulers and the ruled. In the political structure of Rus there was no place for a Slav-Northman ethnic symbiosis, especially since there is no evidence for the invasion or colonization of Rus at all.

This is supported by comparative historical studies. Of the 800 names mentioned in the Novgorod Chronicle only 19, or 2.4 per cent are of Scandinavian origin, and of the 400 names in the Deeds of Novgorod and Pskov there are only 4, or one per cent, names that are Scandinavian, and these are all nobles. In the multilingual armed force of the Russian princes, where there were Turks, Finns, Poles and others, the Northman element was one of the components.

The Scandinavian element in place-names is also negligible. A comparison of Rus and England after the Northman invasion shows that the Northman element in the former was a mere drop in the Slav ocean. In England, for instance, one hundred and fifty Danish place-names have been found over an area of 10,000 sq km, whereas in Rus over the same area only 5. There is no information in any of the sources about a Northman conquest of Rus and the very idea is contradicted by comparative historical data. For all its enormous land area and narrow approach through the Neva how could the Northmen have invaded Rus, if they were unable even to take the lands of the Esti, the Kursh and the Saami which lie along the coast. It is significant that the word "Varangian" is not found in the name of any single town or trading post, nor is there any information on Varangian landed property in Rus in either the chronicles, the Runic inscriptions, the Sagas or the legal deeds. There are no place-names derived from Scandinavian female names. And the Northmen, if they did not depart altogether, rapidly assimilated with the local population. All this shows

the groundlessness of attempts by some Swedish historians to "nationalize history in their favour" as P. Portal aptly put it. Consequently, the invitation of the Slav nobility (if we accept the chronicles' story, which is dubious in a number of points) for Northman princes to rule Rus by treaty does not mark the founding of the Russian state—a process that took many centuries and occurred among the Slav tribes themselves—but the final stage of its formation.

The history of Slav-Scandinavian relations takes place rather on a different plane. We have yet to see how emigrants from Northern Europe—mercenary soldiers, warriors, merchants and diplomats—found in Rus a second native land and played a definite role in the formation by the Slav nobility of that huge multinational state.

This state was formed and reached its zenith between the 9th and the 11th centuries. In 839 Russian envoys were sent to Byzantine and Germany, and in 860 the Russian army almost took Constantinople. About this time, according to the chronicles, the main centres of North and South Russia were unified under Prince Oleg, who was of Scandinavian extraction. It is known that during the reigns of the first few princes—Oleg, Igor, his wife Olga (945-969), her son Svyatoslav Igorevich (969-972) and his son Vladimir Svyatoslavich (980-1015) almost all the East Slav lands were united as well as many lands that were not Slav.

Rus successfully defeated the Khazars and with force of arms made trade routes into the Caucasus and Central Asia. Under Oleg, Igor and Svyatoslav she fought a series of successful wars against Byzantium which ensured her economic and political interests on the Black Sea. The diplomatic efforts of Olga and Vladimir achieved the spread of Christianity throughout Rus.

The typological studies shed light on the ethnic structure of the Ancient Russian State. Here a comparison between Ancient Rus and the Charlemagne or Byzantine empires is highly instructive. The outward similarity is indisputable, but the ethnic structure of the Russian State was quite different. Ancient Rus was the cradle of the three fraternal peoples—the Russians, the Ukrainians, and the Byelorussians. If we take a look at the map of Ancient Rus during the time of Vladimir Svyatoslavich we can see that Rus proper was territorially, ethnically,

economically, and politically the dominant nucleus of the country, attracting in greater or lesser degree some two dozen different peoples: in the Baltic area—Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians, Prussians—Yatviagi, Livs, Vozhane, Izhoriane; in the North—Karelians, Finns—Yemiane, Saami—Lopari and Komi (including Chudini, Perm, Biarmi); in the Volga area—Mordva, Viada, Mari—Cheremisi and Udmurts; in the North Caucasus—Alani—Asi, Adyghe and some of the Khazars, from the steppe and coastal regions of the Black Sea—Pechenegs, Turks, Polovtsi, Greeks and Alani—Asi, etc.

Archaeologists have shown that a peaceful Slav (and not Northman) colonization of the European region of the country took place in the pre-feudal, pre-state period and it was this that determined the ethnic structure of the Ancient Russian State, while the stability of the ties within it between the Slav and non-Slav peoples left deep traces in the lives of many peoples. This was reflected in the subsequent stages of the history of the Russian state, which showed itself to be incomparably more stable than either the Charlemagne or the Byzantine empires.

The socio-political system of Ancient Rus.

The distinctive characteristics of the Russian State go back to the beginnings of its history. Some originate in the natural geographical and demographical conditions, in the historically uneven migrations of peoples on the road to civilization, others are due to considerations of foreign politics.

Much in explanation of the distinctive social features of Rus proper must come from a study of the multistructural character of her agriculture, which was practised at several different levels (ploughing, cutting woods, fallow lands), and forms of ownership, particularly in view of the fact that as a state Rus came not from the slave-owning system, but from the patriarchal-communal system.

The retarding influence of climatic and soil conditions on the development rates of Rus is an undisputed fact confirmed to a certain extent by the information we have on famines that occurred during the period. But how important labour and material resources were to the emergence of property inequality and a class society is still a matter that requires research both as regards Rus proper and its ethnically different regions.

An important role in the development of the type of society that emerged in Rus and among the non-

Slav peoples was played, as in the rest of Europe, by a synthesis of different stadial structures: a synthesis between the feudal relations of Rus and the patriarchal-communal and early feudal (farming, craft-and-hunting and nomadic) non-Slav societies. The importance for Ancient Rus of the synthesis with Persian, Baltic, Finno-Ugric and Turkic elements has still not sufficiently been clarified, although in the process of the genesis of feudalism it is not likely that they played a decisive role.

Whereas the progressive influence of Rus on the non-Slav agricultural, craft-and-hunting and nomadic peoples around her that had not yet formed a state has been the subject of extensive study, the reverse influence of these peoples on Rus has so far received little attention. Ancient Rus occupied a land area of some 1,400,000 sq km and had an estimated population of 5 million. The lands that gravitated towards Rus were even less densely populated. Even in the eastern Baltic area (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) there were only half a million people, and the forest and steppe regions had fewer still and were considerably larger than Rus proper. In those very early times enslaved people fled from Russia to these regions and old Russian lay and ecclesiastical institutions of power and government spread there in varying degree. It is clear that the non-Slav sphere as a whole had a generally retarding effect on Rus, and not only, as is usually considered, with respect to southern Rus bordering on the nomadic tribes. The tributes and other revenues that came from these lands simply went into the "bottomless satin pockets" of the nobility and did nothing for the economy of the country as a whole.

All this explains the great variety of forms which dependence took in Ancient Rus—from the primitive tribute in kind exacted from the non-Slav lands (like the Saami or the Ugrians) to the corvée and quit-rent (in money or in kind) which the Russian lands proper provided. And this is the fundamental reason for the variety of political forms that existed in subsequent periods of history.

In a country where agriculture predominated, the social system was naturally based on land-ownership. In looking at the history of Rus proper during the first three centuries of its state development we observe this ownership taking increasingly stable forms of monopoly as it consolidated in the hands of those who lived on peasant labour and

see the state system of vassalage, which ensured the stability of this monopoly, taking on an increasingly complex structure. This process was reflected in the laws passed by Olga and Vladimir, in the *Russian Law*, a legislative codex drawn up by Yaroslav the Wise and his sons and descendants and in the various charters. After 988 when Rus accepted Christianity, this structure was expanded to include the Church. Vladimir Svyatoslavich forced the Byzantine Empire into concluding a political alliance, which was consolidated through the marriage of the prince to Anna, the sister of the Byzantine emperor. This was a major political success for Rus, especially if we remember that shortly before the Emperor Constantine the Porphyrogenitus had written instructions to his son to the effect that: "If ever any of the cunning, low-born peoples of the north request an alliance with the Roman emperor, or seek the hand of his daughter in marriage, or offer one of their own daughters in marriage to the emperor or to the emperor's son, then it devolves upon you to refuse this ridiculous request..." The times changed.

Vladimir ordered the idols to be destroyed. Orthodox priests came from Constantinople to baptize the inhabitants of Kiev in the waters of the Dnieper. In those areas where there was resistance to Christianity, it was introduced by force. A law passed by Vladimir stated that material provision for the clergy should come primarily from tithes. The Church received all income from the regulation of the norms of family life in the spirit of Christian morality. The subsequent growth of landed property among the higher clergy was reflected, particularly from the 12th century, in the modification of this law, as well as in additional laws passed at Smolensk and Novgorod, which set the forms and amounts for episcopal rent. Thus from ancient times distinctive forms of church organization developed, particularly its dependence on state power, which in old historiography (and in some countries even to this day) is called Moscow "caesaropapism".

Christianity preached the divine origins of princely power over the people: the Church served the rich. At the same time Rus gained access to the cultural heritage of Greece and Rome, and to the rich culture of Byzantium, and formed close ties with the other Orthodox Slav countries.

The coming of Christianity was an important event not only in the development of culture, but

also in social and individual psychology. It must be remembered that our ancestors were bound hand and foot to mystic paganism with all its belief in wood spirits, house ghosts and water spirits, etc., to which a man could hardly take a step without having to make a sacrifice or recite an incantation. Christianity through its more sophisticated mysticism brought apparent liberation from all this. It replaced a disordered and insuperable multitude of demons with a single hierarchy of saints. Henceforth both in life (if it were righteous) and after death man was "overshadowed by the cross".

An important change took place in the cultural life of the country. Writing was introduced and the first schools set up to which Yaroslav the Wise (1036-1054) sent the children of the nobility. Historical chronicles also began to be compiled. According to one of the ancient chroniclers, who left what might be described as a hymn to books and education, "Great use comes from the reading of books for these teach and instruct us ... and from them we acquire wisdom and abstinence..." Churches and monasteries were built, particularly noteworthy among which were the Cathedrals of St. Sophia at Kiev, Novgorod and Polotsk and the Kiev Pechersky Monastery, which contains the remains of the first Russian historical chroniclers. In this way one thousand years ago Rus became one of the advanced Christian states.

Returning to the question of property, we observe that its principal form was state ownership, which by virtue of the patrimonial principle that existed in the early feudal monarchies meant the grand prince's property. Its larger part was turned into the royal domain. What was left was taken over by the boyars, the Church, the nobility, and to a lesser extent by the cities. The free peasants who worked on the state lands had no personal ownership of any of this land themselves. They simply lived by their labour, paying rents and tributes to the prince and his vassals. But these peasants understandably had greater rights to owning land and its alienation than those who did *corvée* on the domain lands. In form these rights coincided with those of the feudal lords, a situation which was all the more understandable in view of the fact that property differentiation and personal success in politics or in war allowed certain members of this particular group of peasants to move up into the ranks of the lower nobility. This

was also the case in other European countries.

The labour of the peasant farmer fed and clothed the country. Rye, oats, wheat, turnips, cabbage, cherries and apples—all the main types of field and garden crops were cultivated. The ordinary people eked out a meagre existence with no ownership of the land they tilled, but with a multitude of obligations like tending the roads and bridges or transporting produce on carts which had once been the common duties of everyone. The princes, the boyars, the nobles and their children, and at a later date the bishops and the monasteries owned the land the people worked on, frequently as part of their own domains and patrimonies, and took from the people in the form of tithes, *corvée* and rent in kind the bulk of the fruits of their labour.

The state laws in the *Russian Law* were strict in their protection of the lord's property—his land, cattle, hives, boats, fishing nets, etc. The laws of the Church served the same purpose. Any attempt on the lives of the lords meant that the peasants really had been driven to extremes.

In the villages and towns conflict seethed between rich and poor, at times breaking out into open revolt with the people destroying the houses of the voivodes, governors and judges. Frequently the outbreaks in Kiev, Novgorod, Galich, Vladimir and Smolensk, i. e. the cities of Rus proper, coincided with similar outbreaks in Estonia, Komi and other lands. Then the lords would hurriedly leave aside their internal squabbles or warring and rush to protect their lands and the revenue and privileges they brought them. With the swords of the prince's armed force, the provisions of the *Russian Law* and the cross of the Church they terrorized, punished and killed ordinary people to force them into submission. It is hardly to be wondered at that the main tribute and tax reforms as well as the legal charters themselves were adopted under the impact of fierce social conflicts that were not infrequently made worse by poor harvests, enemy invasions and famines (1068-1071, 1113, 1136, etc.)

Of course, the peasants could complain to the prince, when the latter went on his annual rounds of the country, presiding over the courts and checking those he had entrusted with power. But peasant rights were insignificant, while their demands for land and work amounted in the main to defence of the "olden days". The labourers on the lands of the

grand prince did retain personal freedom, but those who worked *corvée* on the domain lands were frequently little more than bond slaves.

State revenue came from direct taxes and obligations and from indirect duties. Each main village (*pogost*) in the Russian and non-Russian areas was required to furnish taxes. They were all carefully listed and the amount required from each precisely determined. In northern Rus the *pogost* served as the centre for tax assessment, for the courts and for the Church in each district. It was here that obligations to the state were fixed to be levied from surrounding villages and settlements. The unit of taxation remained the *dym* or peasant family. At first the prince collected taxes in kind during his annual rounds, but subsequently he merely checked his income from the various towns and villages. Apart from quit-rent there were various levies. There was the *dar*, or offerings to the prince from the peasant communes. Other revenue came from expeditions and wars, like the expeditions to Byzantium, the Caucasus and the Balkans during the first stage of the history of Ancient Rus, and the internal wars for princely thrones, cities and even individual *pogosts* during the second. Revenue also came from foreign trade.

Indirect taxes came from various duties and court payments for civil and criminal actions, as well as from trade tariffs and marriage taxes, etc. (part of the revenue was divided between the princes and the bishops). The duties also went towards the upkeep of those who governed and ran the courts, who in turn had only one basic task—to extract as much revenue as possible in the form of tribute, taxes, fines and duties from the peasants and townsfolk.

The system of control in the non-Slav lands had a number of features of its own. Here individual strongholds, fortresses and towns were built, and the local nobility became, according to the degree to which it had accepted Christianity, a single dominant class. There was no extensive Russian colonization. Early feudal forms for collecting tribute remained, under which it was collected by the local nobility and delivered to the central *pogosts*. Russian trade was extensively known in the non-Slav lands. On the whole the latter's subjection to Ancient Rus was beneficial, as became particularly clear when the Crusades began.

"Not for nothing did the prince bear arms", he was the head of the principality, which either meant the whole of Rus, or a vassal principality within that whole. He controlled the state, the courts, the legislation and the army. Not infrequently he also involved himself in ecclesiastical affairs. The assertion is frequently made in foreign publications that Ancient Rus did not have to contend with the struggle over simony, or with conflicts between the Church and the state. The truth is that it did. Not only did the princes encroach on the province of the metropolitans, they also removed some bishops from office and put others in their place. It was also not unknown for them to put holy offices up for sale.

But the prince could do nothing without the *duma*, the council of boyars, wealthy citizens and ecclesiastical dignitaries. At first these councils were held infrequently, but later when the nobility gained more land, and in the capital cities and their suburbs grew up patrimonial estates and monasteries, the palaces of the princes began to look more like royal courts, the higher organs of power with their ever more clear-cut departments of administration. A whole civil service developed at these courts to deal with the affairs of state. Apart from civil servants it included butlers, clerical workers, *stolniks* (table servants), stable hands and saddlers. From among these the prince appointed regional governors—*posadniks*; *voivodes* and *tyatskys* who had command of the troops; and *tiuns* who controlled the treasury, the courts and the disposition of property. These officials lived off their offices, frequently building up large entourages and villages around them. This type of vassalage which was known as *kormleniye*—boyars' right to tax for their own benefit the population in the area under their administration, eventually replaced the *polyudye* (collection of tribute from the territories under the prince).

From miniature paintings and archaeological artifacts we can form a good idea of the outward appearance of the dwellers of Ancient Rus. First there was the prince. He wore a red coat of fine Byzantine cloth decorated with pearls. His boots were of morroco leather, his hat and belt ornamented with gold and his dress fitted with a turned-down collar and perforated with a multitude of buttonholes. On his finger he wore a ring with the seal. Next came the boyars and merchants in long-

Russia

skirted kaftans of rich Spanish, English and Oriental cloths. Their wives wore silks, adorned their necks with silver braided pendants and put the newly fashionable bronze or glass bracelets on their wrists. Unmarried girls wore their hair in plaits, while those who were married wore diadems on their modestly coiffured hair. Male and female attire was strictly differentiated: "it is not seemly for men to wear women's clothes, nor women men's". All men had their hair bobbed.

The ordinary people, the peasants and the artisans, wore coarse, heavy kaftans (*sermyaga*), which were high waisted and encircled with a buckled belt, from which hung leather pouches containing all the things they needed to hand, like knives, combs, and purses, etc., since pockets had not yet been invented.

Living a life of poverty in his hut heated by a chimneyless stove, tilling the soil with nothing but the poorest of tools, enjoying no civil rights and continually faced with the threat of famine and war—such was the fate of the peasant in Ancient Rus.

Those, on the other hand, whose welfare was based on oppressing the peasant possessed enormous tracts of land, herds of cattle, estates worked by large numbers of serfs and stone houses in the cities. They spent their time watching or taking part in jousting tournaments, attending religious services, marching on military expeditions, rebelling in drunken feasts, or administering justice and meting out punishment.

The political division of Ancient Rus. In the course of the first three centuries of its history the political structure of Rus underwent significant changes. The relative unity of the state was not long-lasting, as was already becoming clear after the death of Yaroslav the Wise. The reasons for this were to be found in the social and economic evolution of the country and can be broadly put down to two interrelated causes: the extensive development of feudalism and the decline of the economic and political might of the central authorities. These phenomena gave rise to the structural crisis which is difficult to reveal from original documents, because contemporaries—the Kievan chroniclers—saw it as a conflict between the "old" nobility, who still believed in territorial expansion and expeditions abroad as the main source of enrichment, and the

"new" nobility, who had entrenched themselves in the provincial principalities and whose main source of income was derived from their seigniorages and estates. At the time there were quite a few of these principalities—in Chernigov, in Turov, in Polotsk and in Pereyaslavl.

The chronicles, which reflected the views of the "old" nobility, praised the princes who instead of hoarding gold and silver used them to hire armed soldiers for the purpose of conquering neighbouring countries. But they railed against those modern princes who vainly boasted of their treasures and against the new generation of civil servants who demanded a salary of more than 200 *grivnas* and whose wives were not content with silver jewelry but wanted gold. In a word, the times had changed for the worse.

The basis for these changes lay, as archaeologists have shown, in the inexorable, albeit uneven, development of agriculture and craft industries. The landed property of the boyars and the princes everywhere increased, as is affirmed not only by the land laws of Yaroslav and his sons, but also by information contained in the chronicles on the widely held practice of granting lands for service. Monasteries and episcopal estates multiplied with five dioceses created—at Kiev, Belgorod, Pereyaslavl, Chernigov and Vladimir-Volynsky—during the first hundred years of Christianity. For a country with such a vast land area this was perhaps not so many, but it was an important tendency. The number of towns rose by 64—there were 89 in the 11th and 224 in the 12th century. At the same time the borders became relatively stabilized and revenue from military plunder was drastically reduced.

The overall expansion of patrimonies and landed estates put up the value of land and increased the number of wars that were fought for it. And increasing exploitation of the peasants in its turn heightened their struggle against the lords.

We can get some idea of the scale of the property differentiation which lay at the basis of the social estate division from the *Russian Law* which set the property ratio between boyar and day labourer as 80:5 *grivnas* = 1:16, and from the low rates of payment for work both in the towns and villages. During the building of the Monastery of St. George in Kiev in the 11th century the workers were paid one-twentieth of a *grivna* per day and many poverty

stricken people came to work there. A Rostov woman and her daughter were paid one *grivna* for a whole summer season's hard work. By way of comparison it should be remembered that the office of bishop cost 1000 *grivnas*, or 1000 years of peasant labour.

The frequent internecine wars and recurrent bad harvests, cattle diseases, epidemics and famines (which occurred on average every seven years and were particularly bad when they coincided with famines all over Europe) did much to reduce the land holdings of the free peasants and consequently increase social conflict. The lords' control over the land thus came under threat and either greater support was required from Kiev or changes in the political structure through expansion of the rights of the provincial princes, boyars, nobles and cities.

It would appear at first sight that the grand prince of Kiev was strong. Kiev, Chernigov and Pereyaslavl, the centres of the "Russian Land" as it was called, were all in his domain. (Later when this domain was divided up, the "Russian Land", as was the case in France with the Ile de France, acquired two meanings—the centre of the country and the whole of Rus.) So also were the "power centres" in the whole of southern Lower Rus as well as Novgorod, Pskov and other centres of northern Upper Rus and the majority of fortresses in the former pre-state principalities. And yet for all this the monarch in Kiev was powerless to defend the social interests of the nobility in the new principalities. He had no time for Galich or Novgorod, or for Smolensk or Rostov, his attention being primarily devoted to internal conflicts in his immediate territories and to the continual threat of invasion from the nomadic tribes.

The decline of the economic strength of the grand prince is not hard to trace through what happened in the so-called "Russian Land". The first crack appeared in 1026 when Chernigov broke away. Subsequently, after the death of Mstislav Vladimirovich the domain passed to Yaroslav the Wise (1036-1054), who arranged in his will for the division of the "Russian Land" into three parts. After the internecine bloodshed, an All-Rus Council of Princes was called in Lyubech in 1097 to decide the problem of the division of lands. It decided in favour of the provincial princes according to the principle "let every man retain the land of his father".

This system finally triumphed in 1132 in Rus and in 1138 in Poland, which had undergone a similar socio-political evolution, according to the Statute of Boleslav the Wry-Mouthed. A polycentric political system had now been established in Rus.

Research into the history of Ancient Rus has shown that the same laws of social, economic and political evolution operated there as in other European countries during the medieval period.

In Ancient Rus the early medieval monarchy was replaced by a politically fragmented monarchy. The state system acquired a new form of government in which the capital, Kiev, and the "Russian Land" in its domain were made subject to the collective suzerainty of the most powerful princes. These were the princes of Vladimir-Suzdal, Galich-Volyn, Smolensk and Chernigov. All the princes who were responsible for the destiny of the "Russian Land" demanded a share of it (the *prichastye*) and revenues in proportion to the contribution they made to its government and defence. Their rights and duties were determined by the all-Rus assemblies. After the one-man rule of Yaroslav and Monomakh, Rus was virtually governed by either a triumvirate or a diarchy.

A similar system was revived after the Mongol-Tatar devastation of the country, at the dawn of the centralized state in North-East Rus at the turn into the 14th century with respect to the Vladimir Grand Principality.

The social foundations of this tendency to unity were laid in the 12th and 13th centuries and can be seen to have existed all over Rus. The development of seigniorial landed property in the break-away principalities is reflected in such sources as still exist on the history of the Vladimir-Suzdal, Galich-Volyn and Novgorod-Pskov lands. It involved an increase in the political role of the provincial nobility, both secular and clerical, who were opposed to political unity and the strong state power of the new princes. To oppose the separatism of the nobility the provincial princes (Yaroslav Vladimirovich, Roman Mstislavich and Daniil Romanovich from Galich-Volyn, and Andrei Yuryevich and Vsevolod Yuryevich, Yaroslav Vsevolodovich and Alexander Yaroslavich Nevsky from Vladimir-Suzdal) used the central and provincial state lands to consolidate the power of the service noblemen, *milostniks* (those who were given land for service), boyar children

and service boyars, who were now gaining in strength.

The ranks of the service nobility and boyars were not only supplemented through heredity. The sources name a number of boyars who came from among well-to-do peasants (the increasing practice of paying rent in kind had led to the stratification of the peasantry); from the lower clergy—priests; from the knights in the prince's junior armed force (*druzhina*); and, finally, from among administrators of all ranks who used extortion to win a place among the service gentry.

Consequently during this period of fragmentation the nobility and the service boyars came to play a decisive role in the subsequent centralization of the country. There developed a political and military hierarchy that corresponded to the differentiated character of landownership; a hierarchy that was linked with the armed force in which the highest military and judicial power belonged to the landowners; and an association of these landowners, who from a class point of view stood opposed to the peasantry oppressed by them. The vassal system in Rus was characterized by the same well-known methods of controlling internal contradictions as had arisen among the feudal lords of other European countries in their struggle for land, rent and immunity. These included *kormleniye* (a system by which boyars responsible for local administration retained part of revenues for their own use), *mestnichestvo* (order of precedence based on birth and service), various forms of vassalage and the prince's courts and so on. Some foreign scholars who see vassalage as the basis of feudalism still for some reason reject Soviet historians' arguments and conclusions regarding its presence in Rus. Thus the political structure came into conformity with the redistributions of land that had occurred earlier and that favoured the local princely dynasties and the boyars and noblemen that had served them.

Also of interest in the major principalities is the emergence of social estate representation in the form of the early local assemblies (*Zemsky sobor*), which chronologically speaking coincided with the appearance of the first parliament in France. They were recorded (1182) as being formed at the Galich court of Yaroslav Osmomysl (the Sage) and at the court of Vsevolod the Big Nest, prince of Vladimir and Suzdal in 1211. This latter, according to the

chronicles, "called all the boyars from the towns and *volosts*, the bishops ... and hegumens, the priests and the merchants, the nobles and all the people". Both princes supported the assemblies to prevent their thrones from being transferred to direct heirs.

The new political status of power had the support of the towns, which also found the power of the Kievan monarch and his nobility burdensome. The new towns became a force which together with the nobility began to seriously undermine the importance of the old cities that had flourished under the Kievan monarchs. In vain did the Kievan nobility run down the inhabitants of Novgorod, calling them "carpenters"; as the Novgorod chronicler ironically noted, one should have had "two heads" to wilfully occupy the throne of Novgorod. In vain did the Rostov nobility call the inhabitants of Vladimir "serfs". Vladimir-on-the-Klyazma stood at the head of North-East Rus only to later yield its place to Tver, Nizhni Novgorod and eventually to Moscow. The same happened in the south-west, where Peremyshl yielded its position to Galich, and that subsequently to Kholm and then Lvov.

It used at one time to be thought that the towns of Ancient Rus were like "large non-agrarian settlements" without rights of ownership and communal freedoms of their own. And assertions of this kind are still found in university courses of Russian history abroad. But differentiated studies of the towns have revealed that as well as the patrimonial and guard towns there were also quite a few large free cities like Novgorod, Kiev, Galich, Polotsk, Smolensk and Vladimir.

The treaties that were signed between these cities and the princes are a clear sign of the strengthening of the communal rights of the free cities. They were signed for the same reasons as the treaties that were made between the princes and their vassals on the division of Rus. They unquestionably demonstrate the supreme state authority's recognition of the right of the free cities to own land, while the town councils (in the event of difficulties they could rely on the permanent support of certain sections of the townsfolk) acted as a seigniorial corporation with the right to immunity.

The popular assemblies of these towns were already in the hands of the nobility, but frequently and especially at times of the uprisings of the poor

they became a means through which the poor could struggle against social oppression. The main condition of the treaties with the princes stipulated that all the lands acquired by them or their deputies, or received for services to the townsmen, or seized through force, or purchased with money were to be returned to the city should the prince leave it.

The concept of a "free city" in medieval Rus was a complicated notion. It was made more so by a number of factors: first, the continued presence of the prince's armed force (*druzhina*). Then there was the continued interference from the Church, whose representatives would attend the city council with all the impressive power of the city monasteries at their command. Then again was the fact that in comparison with the boyars the legal status of the merchants was subject to numerous constraints. Finally, the urban "patriciate" or *muzhi* as they were called were usually divided into inimical parties supporting one prince or another whose struggle for power wreaked havoc on the political life of Rus.

Studies of the part played by the towns in the formation of the Russian centralized state show clearly that for all the difficulties caused by the Mongol-Tatar invasion, the Russian cities developed as a result of feudal fragmentation and were not created anew.

The Church was also a powerful source of support for the political status of the authorities. The growth of landed property among the clerical nobility, particularly from the 12th century, was reflected in the Statutes of Vladimir Svyatoslavich which were promulgated throughout Rus and in the modified (in view of the Church's thirst for land) statutes of Smolensk and Novgorod (mid-12th century). These statutes fixed the amounts of the various diocesan incomes and the form in which they were to be paid as well as the amount of rent they were to receive. Initially this income came from tithes, from their rapidly increasing amounts of landed property and from the revenues of the ecclesiastical courts. The diocesan centres (of which there were 16 by the time of the Mongol invasion) tended as a rule to be located in the capitals of the separate principalities. The monasteries also began to increase rapidly in number. According to sources from the 12th and 13th centuries, there were 84 of these in the Vladimir-and-Suzdal and Novgorod-and-Pskov lands

alone. They had their own statutes, which defined the place of the Church in the new conditions. These statutes appeared during the struggle between the clerical and the lay nobility for the division of land and revenues, and were the result of the same circumstances as had produced the treaties between the princes and their vassals and the princes and the towns.

During the subsequent centralization of Rus the Church continued (for all the deviations caused by the Mongol invasion and rivalry with Lithuania) to pursue the path it had begun in this period, by moving its centre from Galich and Kiev first to Vladimir and then to Moscow.

Unfortunately in Rus no works similar to the *De administrando imperio* or the *Dictatus Papae* have remained, but the chronicles and other sources leave no doubt that even during the period of fragmentation (which was not complete) the inhabitants of all parts of the country clearly recognized that they belonged to the Russian people and opposed any attempt on the part of foreigners to occupy the lands of Rus. The princes also held to the belief that only members of the Russian ruling dynasty could occupy the princes' thrones, that they were "grandsons of the same grandfather" and that there is no place for them outside Rus, "either among the Hungarians or among the Poles".

In the sphere of culture, particularly in chronology and literature, a number of strong ideological trends developed as can be seen in the Chronicles of Volyn and Suzdal, *The Lay of Igor's Host*, the *Supplication of Daniil the Exile*, and the lives of the grand princes, all of which supported national unity and its bearers, the grand princes themselves.

This belief was also strongly reflected in the ideological writings of the Muscovite "Renaissance".

With the support of the service nobility and the rapidly growing towns and cities (on the eve of the Mongol invasion some 300 of these are mentioned in the sources with more than 80 in Galich-and-Volyn, over 40 in Vladimir-and-Suzdal and 40 in Polotsk-and-Minsk) the provincial princes waged a strong campaign against boyar separatism. Many years later and under different circumstances the founders of the Russian centralized state continued the same policy of redistributing the boyar lands so as to ensure the stability of the grand prince's power.

As the political importance of Kiev went into decline the new principalities (some of these were larger than whole countries in Europe: Vladimir-and-Suzdal, for example, was larger than England) rivaled with each other for lands, towns and political power. This rivalry was reflected in the composition and results of the last two all-Rus assemblies of princes that are known to us to have been held in Kiev in 1223 and 1231, and it had a fateful effect on the outcome of the heroic struggle of the Russian people against the Mongol invasion.

Consequently, the historical importance of Ancient Rus from the 12th to the mid-13th century consists in the fact that it laid the material and social foundations for the formation of a centralized state as it is outlined in the researches of L. V. Cherepnin and his school (the works of A. M. Sakharov, A. D. Gorsky and others). The external political conditions only narrowed the territorial basis of this process, making it more difficult and slowing it down.

Foreign trade of Ancient Rus. The beginning of Rus's trade relations with other countries is lost in the mists of time, when the lands belonging to the Polyane, Slovenye and others, which were situated on the crossroads of the ancient trade routes connecting the Baltic with the Black Sea and Cordoba with Baghdad, took part in European and Asiatic trade. At first trade went along the ancient routes which led to Rome; hence the dependence of old Russian dry measures and money weights on the Roman. The country's foreign trade proper only began with the formation of the Ancient Russian State, which took over its control and legal protection.

Rus's trade links, as can be seen in the writings of the time and in the archaeological finds of foreign coins and imported goods, embraced all the countries of Europe and many in the East. Rus traded with the Arab world, with the Caliphate of Baghdad and the states that arose after its decline, but its closest contacts were with the countries of Europe. Here it maintained an active trade balance and a high turnover, receiving many thousands of foreign coins like denarii, miliarisia and bracteates, and later with the increase in the raw materials and consumer goods trade, silver bars—marks (*grivnas*). This trade, of course, had a great and ever increasing influence on the country's foreign policy.

The princes, the towns, the boyars and the monasteries were very concerned to market abroad their surplus tribute, produce (like honey, wax, furs, caviare and salt fish) and handicrafts, and, finally, serfs. It is interesting to note that Upper and Lower Rus had quite different import and export requirements. The south exported salt and grain, while the north imported them. The south, on the other hand, imported Byzantine and Oriental artware, while the north exported handicrafts. But the whole country wanted to acquire gold, silver, rich cloths, icons, Morocco, glassware, thoroughbred horses and special varieties of wood and spices.

From the 10th century Russian trade with Byzantium and the towns of Central and Northern Europe was regulated either by joint agreements (like the Russo-Byzantine trade agreements of 907, 911, 944, 988 and 1043, etc.), or by state charters to towns (like those to Regensburg and Lübeck) and to the visiting or resident Russian merchants there, or, finally, by agreements signed between Russian towns and unions of foreign towns (like the agreements of 1189-1199 and 1229 made by Novgorod and Smolensk).

These documents contained measures to be taken for the protection of the houses and streets where Russian merchants lived in Constantinople, Regensburg, Riga, etc., and for similar protection to be granted to foreign merchants in Kiev, where there were Hungarian, Polish and Jewish traders, or in Galich, where there were Germans, or in Novgorod where there were merchants from Germany, Prussia, Sweden and Denmark. The treaties provided for the early forms of diplomatic immunity and guaranteed the personal security of ambassadors, merchants, hostages and merchant priests from murder, attack, arrest and the debtors' prison. To a lesser extent they guaranteed security of personal property. But there was no one type of charter either in nature or in the kind of rights it provided for. These charters were primarily concerned with the assessment of tax duties.

But difficult as it was to trade with all the risks involved, the profits were high (up to 50 per cent) and so Russians in Greece, Romans in Rus and Jews that had "reached Rus" gradually and with increasingly stronger commercial threads began to darn the tattered fabric that was medieval Europe. It took ten days from Kiev to Constantinople, five

days from Novgorod to Birka. With a tail wind Volin could be reached within a fortnight, Denmark within a month and Rome within half a year.

They also sailed to England. Gervase, Chancellor of Otto IV (13th century), who was himself born in Tilbury on the Thames, believed that it was possible to sail from Britain to Rus through the White Sea. He thought that beyond Denmark lay Norway and beyond Norway to the north, Russia—beyond a sea that joined both the English Sea and the Arctic Ocean, being separated from them by islands. Therefore, he believed, it was easy to get from one country to another, but it would take a long time. The English did reach Norway, but did they get to Rus? The evidence suggests they did: the Irish built a Church of St. Mary in Kiev; in Novgorod archaeologists have found articles that were made in England; and English coins have been also found. In the *Life of Thomas of Canterbury* (late 12th century) which opens with a description of London, it mentions among the merchants of all nations that visited the capital, Norwegians and Russians bringing “the furs of squirrels and sables”.

Trade with the East reached Bulgaria (from Kiev to Bulgar was about twenty days of journey), Khazaria (Ital and with its decline—Saksin) and went on to Derbent, Baku, Berdaa, Amol, and Rey. Another route led to Yaik and Khorezm, which took 27 days to reach from Rus. In Urgench there was a Russian settlement, where Russian furs, flax and cured calve's leather have been found. They sailed across the Crimea to Trapezund; from Iran Russian merchants reached Baghdad and Alexandria and their wares went on as far as Kabul.

The beginning of the Crusade against Rus and its subject peoples in the 13th century was accompanied by attempts to disorganize the trade relations that Rus had built up over the centuries, to tear up the treaties signed and to subject the Slav-Baltic lands to blockade. The idea for this was first mooted by a Papal Curia and it found its specific expression in a series of Bulls forbidding trade in weapons, iron and salt with the peoples of the Baltic area and the “schismatics” of Rus.

But although for a time Rus was prevented from sailing on the Baltic, it was impossible to break her trading links completely. Trade proved stronger than war, and when it became clear that the Crusade against Rus had collapsed, the German, Swed-

ish and Danish merchants began to renew their treaties with that country.

Kiev, described at the time as the “rival of Constantinople” and as a “beautiful pearl of the Greek cultural world”, had by the early 11th century 8 markets, 400 churches and an enormous merchant population, both native and foreign. The chronicles record that here during the 12th and 13th centuries there were Latins, Germans and those described as simply “guests”. Their position was so stable that the Papal envoy, Plano Carpini, who visited Kiev in 1245 after the Tatar-Mongol invasion still found here merchants from Poland, Byzantium, Austria, Genoa, Venice, Pisa and perhaps France. He travelled there with merchants from Wrocław and evidently their purpose was either to stop contacts entirely, or to see whether new contacts could be established with Rus and with the Golden Horde that had devastated it.

This brief account of Rus's trade throws additional light on the country's foreign policy, particularly on the defence of its traditional interests in the Baltic, the Black Sea, the Caspian and the Mediterranean. It is evident that even in those far off times international commercial unions existed and were relatively stable, some even outlasting the devastations caused by the Mongol invasion. The sources completely repudiate the idea that is still popular among historians abroad that Russian trade declined in the 12th century as a result of the changing trade routes after the crusades.

The economic renaissance of the country and its foreign trade after the Mongol invasion was primarily due to the formation of a Russian centralized state.

Ancient Rus—a great power in the medieval world. Above we stated our intention to take a closer look at Russo-Scandinavian relations so as to get a better idea of the real role played by the Varangians in Rus. When the Varangian force in Kiev that was subject to Vladimir Svyatoslavich demanded a redemption fee of two *grivnas* (this was then the price of a peasant horse) from each of the inhabitants—this was a fairly common occurrence during the Viking invasions of other European capitals—the prince immediately “reshuffled” his mercenaries. Those who were more reliable he left for himself, the rest he sent to Byzantium.

Again, when in 1014 the Varangian force that

Again, when in 1014 the Varangian force that had served under Oleg in Novgorod at the modest cost of 300 *grivnas* (and here we recall that Novgorod paid Kiev 2,000 *grivnas*, 1,000 of which was intended for the upkeep of the Russian prince's garrison) began disobeying orders, their fate was decided by Yaroslav the Wise.

Thus Rus not only laid a firm hand on the Viking mercenaries who were looking for employment, it opposed the aggressive aspirations of the Vikings and thereby exerted a considerable influence on the policy of North European countries. When the Danish King Canute II the Great extended his sway over England in 1016 and Norway in c. 1030, Yaroslav supported his opponents. The sons of the English king, Edmund Ironside, whom Canute had defeated, found refuge in Rus and the Russian prince "kept them close to him". Norwegian kings were also given shelter in Rus and from there Olaf Tryggvesson set out for the war against Denmark. His son, Magnus the Good (1035-1046) who later conquered Denmark, was recalled from Rus to assume the throne of Norway. It is a significant fact that also at this time the English threw off the Danish yoke and returned their own king, Edward the Confessor (1042-1066) to the throne.

The famous Norwegian Viking, Harold Hard-Ruler (1047-1066), also ascended the Norwegian throne after service in Russia: he had taken part in an expedition against Byzantium (1043). In Kiev he had fallen in love with Elizaveta, daughter of Yaroslav, in whose honour he composed poems which won her heart. They were joined in wedlock, but later he died in England in the struggle that followed the death of Edward the Confessor. Rus maintained its friendship with Sweden with Yaroslav marrying Ingigerda-Irene, daughter of Olaf Skutkonung.

Rus maintained similar independence with respect to the French and Italian states that had arisen with Viking participation and were identified with Northmen by contemporaries. A treaty signed by Vladimir Svyatoslavich with Byzantium provided for a force of 6,000 Russians to serve in Byzantium from 988 till 1070, which took an active part in the empire's Caucasian, Balkan and Arab policy and was used to put down internal disorders.

When William the Conqueror invaded England and established himself as king (from 1066 to 1087),

the English royal family fled via Flanders to Denmark, where they were supported by Rus. By that time Rus was already in alliance with that country, whose king, Sweyn (1046-1076) had married the widowed Elizaveta, daughter of Yaroslav. Through their mediation, according to Norwegian and Danish chroniclers, Githa, the daughter of the King, was promised in marriage to Vladimir Monomakh at Roskilde (c. 1074). She remained his wife for 31 years and accompanied him on all his journeys through Rus. She died in Smolensk in 1107, as the prince himself recorded in his book, the *Instruction of Vladimir Monomakh*.

The Scandinavian countries, plunged as they were in political disarray, looked for alliance with a powerful country like Rus. In the late 11th century the son of Monomakh and Githa, Mstislav-Harold, married Christina, the daughter of the Swedish king, Ing Steinkels. The Danish King, Eric III the Good (1095-1103), visited Rus just before ascending the throne and evidently in search of support. Malmfrid, the daughter of Mstislav, married the Norwegian Prince Sigurd I in 1111. On his death she married Eric Emun (1134-1137), the son of Eric III. Another daughter of Mstislav, Ingeborg, became the wife of the second son of Eric III, Canute Lavard (1129-1131) and remained with him till he died in Lübeck. Their son, who subsequently became Waldemar I of Denmark (1157-1182) took his name likely in honour of his grandfather, Vladimir Monomakh.

Age-old relations with Byzantium were an important part of Rus's foreign policy. The Ancient Russian State had developed, strengthened, fixed its borders, established its trade rights and finally demanded sovereignty for its Christian Church all against the implacable opposition of Byzantium, and in doing so had influenced the latter's development.

Holding on to its Caucasian, Black Sea and Danube possessions by force, Byzantium tried to weaken Rus by alliances with the khans of the nomadic hordes in the south Russian steppes. The state doctrine as formulated by the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus ran as follows: "When the Romaic Emperor lives in peace with the Pechenegs, neither Rus, nor the Turks (Hungarians) can invade the Romaic state; nor can they demand from Romaic people excessive amounts of money and

goods in payment for peace..." This doctrine relied on an espionage system, whose basis was outlined by a contemporary of Vassily II in a treatise entitled *De casrametatione*, which set out the principles of external and internal strategy and stipulated the need "to have such spies" as can discover "all the plans of Bulgaria, Pechenegia, Hungary and Rus". Exploiting the Church's connection with Rus (which was particularly strong after 988), the Byzantine government tried to influence its foreign policy and encourage (particularly after the schism of 1054) alienation between Rus and the Catholic states of Europe that were hostile to the empire.

But Rus too skilfully utilized its political, economic, religious and cultural ties with Byzantium, being aware that the weak and unstable, though still rich and politically sophisticated Byzantium had a deep and long-lasting interest in maintaining the security of its Crimean, Caucasian and Balkan possessions, that it was dependent on the albeit expensive, yet very necessary military aid provided by Rus against the Arabs, Turks and Vikings and that it had strong desires on the income from the Russian metropolitan see. In sending a force of 6,000 pole-axe-bearing troops on expeditions against the Arabs and the Vikings when they threatened Byzantium in the 10th and 11th centuries, Rus was strengthening its influence not only in the Caucasus, but also in the Mediterranean at Apulia and Calabria by affecting the course of the Byzantine-German struggle for Italy. Moreover, the trade links between Rus and the lands that had once been ruled by Baghdad never ceased.

The sources show that having ousted Byzantium, Rus took the steppe policy into its own hands, making confederates out of the Pechenegs, the Turks and a large part of the Polovtsi.

Rus maintained broad links with Catholic, Islamic and pagan countries alike, whether they were friendly or hostile to Byzantium. But her ties were particularly close with neighbouring Slav countries.

Of all inter-Slav relations, probably those of the greatest importance for Europe were the relations between Rus and Poland. There were, of course, areas of disputed interest in the border and Prussian zones, but Rus and Poland passed through this period of mutual intervention in quarrels among the princes (there were the Polish expeditions against

Rus in 1018 and 1069, and the Russian expeditions against Poland in 1041, 1043 and 1047) and the adherence to mutually hostile coalitions fairly quickly. Gradually the borders became stabilized, and they entered into a close alliance (viz., the treaties of 1042, 1074, 1077, 1099, 1103, 1145 and later years). This alliance was supported on the Russian side by Kiev and Volyn and on the Polish by Cracow and Plock. After Russia entered into a period of political fragmentation, Volyn, Smolensk and Chernigov, though inimical to Byzantium, remained in alliance with Poland and Hungary, whereas the Suzdal princes tended to a rapprochement with Germany and Byzantium. Neither in Rus nor in Poland were there any social groups interested in broad territorial expansion, or capable of conducting it. Moreover, age-old trade links, vast areas of mutual ethnic infiltration and common interests in the colonization of Prussia contributed to closer relations between the two countries. In accordance with the spirit of solidarity felt by ruling dynasties, that were closely linked through matrimonial unions, first one government then another gave neighbourly help with the purpose of strengthening the power of each.

History shows that Germany in making her aggressive offensive across the Oder attached paramount importance to inflaming mutual conflicts between the Slavic countries in a bid to get Hungary, Austria, Saxony and Denmark involved in them. For a time she was successful, particularly under Henry II (1002-1024), who thus tried to weaken both Polish resistance to German intrusion into the Slav Pomorye and Russian participation in the German-Byzantine conflict over Italy.

But Yaroslav the Wise put a swift end to this plan. He formed an alliance with Casimir Piast (1042) and when Henry III (1039-1056) refused to support Rus against Byzantium (1043), he replied by actually strengthening his alliances with Byzantium itself (1046), with King Andrew I of Hungary (1046-1061) and with France.

King Henry I of France (1031-1060) believed it expedient to ask for the hand of a daughter of Yaroslav the Wise, powerful Russian prince, whose mercenary detachment had aided Byzantium in defeating the French Normans at Cannes and at Malfi. Financial and moral support from Rus could be of great use to the King of France in his difficult

Russia

struggle for the unity of the country against the feudal league of Count Raoul de Crépy. An alliance with France was part of the anti-Byzantine and anti-German policy of Yaroslav the Wise. Apparently, there were many diplomatic missions between the courts of Kiev and Paris preceding the marriage.

Following the tradition of Yaroslav the Wise, the princes of Volyn-and-Kiev developed their alliance with Hungary, which in 1102 reached the Adriatic to begin a century-long war against Byzantium.

The policy of Russo-Polish-Hungarian rapprochement made it possible for Poland to beat off the attacks launched by Henry V (1099, 1111, 1125) and avoid war on two fronts during the invasions of Friedrich I Barbarossa (1157, 1172, 1184). In these wars Poland was continually supported by Volyn to the extent that in a letter to Wiebald, Abbot of Corvey, the emperor named the Russians as the worst of his enemies.

Rus and Germany were linked by long-standing and mutually advantageous trade relations in which more than 30 German towns and cities were involved. From 838 numerous Russian embassies visited Germany. Olga and Vladimir maintained relations with the Saxon dynasty in connection with the adoption of Christianity, and Yaroslav the Wise over the Polish question.

Relations with Germany were also maintained, particularly, by the princes of Vladimir-and-Suzdal, under the Staufens. The frequent number of "German Gates", as they were called, in Russian cities and the "Russian Streets" in German cities are the visible evidence of these stable trade links. Russians are mentioned in the *Nibelungenlied* and in descriptions of the adventures of Siegfried and Tristan. Particularly noteworthy, of course, is the way in which the heroes of the ancient Russian epics are also found in the German epics, as for instance Iliaz von Reuzzen portrayed as the trusty servant of the German king. But Rus opposed the German seizure of Slav lands and the transfer of the Baltic trading posts into German hands, since from ancient times they had come within the Russian sphere of interest, as can be seen from the early trading agreements of Lübeck, Novgorod and Smolensk.

In the Crusades, which were the most important international event in the Middle Ages, Rus participated in a variety of ways. The First Crusade

(1096-1099) took place after Rus had recalled her military force from Byzantium. According to the French chronicler, Albert de Aix, King Kálmán of Hungary was ready to run in fear of the approaching crusaders "to the Russian kingdom". The First Crusade was also mentioned by the Russian chroniclers, and a Russian monastery still continued to exist in Jerusalem after its fall. During the Second Crusade (1147-1149) Russian and Polish troops went to defend the Baltic coast, a fact that is mentioned in the Annals of Magdeburg. But Rus also had connections with other participants in the Crusade, like the King of France, Louis VII. The King of Bohemia, Vladislav II returned from the Crusade via Rus.

In the Third Crusade (1189-1192) Rus took no part, but the Russian chroniclers noted the fall of Jerusalem (1187) and the campaign of Friedrich I.

The Fourth Crusade (1203-1204) like the Second was virtually directed against Hither Asia and the Baltic, and Rus with its subject non-Slav lands was its prime aim. This time it was for Rus not a question of far-off expeditions against the pagans, but of defending its own possessions and independence.

The Fourth Crusade coincided with the break-up of the Russo-Polish-Hungarian alliance as well as with an acute worsening of Russo-Scandinavian relations, both of which developments were in large measure due to the machinations of the Papal Curia. Sowing death and destruction the German knights seized the lands between the Vistula and the Niemen and took the Dvina basin. Bitter fighting and heavy defeats at the hands of the Mongol-Tatars fell to the lot of Rus at that time, but she did win some brilliant victories over the crusaders. It was then that Rus's role in the history of the Middle Ages was most clearly revealed. Sorely wounded in unequal combat, Rus nevertheless broke the back of Mongolian onslaught against Europe, while at the same time defeating the crusaders of Sweden (1240), Denmark and Germany (1242), and Poland and Hungary (1245), and burying for good the universalist pretensions of the empire and the Papacy.

Thus Ancient Rus played a prominent role in the formation of the political map of Europe. She took active part in the struggle against the Arabs, the Vikings, the Byzantine Empire and the Germans, as well as against the Papacy with its claims to univer-

salism. She met the main thrust of the Turkic nomadic invasion. Finally, Rus's victory against the crusaders from six countries, coinciding as it did with the Mongol-Tatar invasion, became a turning point in world history, that determined, as we shall see, the destiny of a large part of Europe.

Culture of Ancient Rus. Russian cities like Novgorod, Kiev, Smolensk and Polotsk were already well known to the Scandinavians. Foreigners were amazed at the magnificence of Kiev with its Golden Gates and churches.

When the princes and boyars in various parts of the country grew strong enough to break away from Kiev, the towns they controlled like Vladimir-on-the-Klyazma, Galich-on-the-Dniestr, Lutsk, Turov, Grodno and Ryazan, gradually developed into the capitals of independent principalities. Thousands of urban craftsmen, weapon-makers and gold-beaters provided the country with tools, weapons and fine articles of bronze, silver and gold skillfully ornamented with niello, enamel and precious stones.

Time has not been generous in sparing the fruits of their labour, and for that reason they are the more valuable to us today. Our ancestors had a highly developed sense of the beautiful. No one can remain indifferent to the *Ostromir Gospels*, to the rings and bracelets or to the magnificence and simplicity of the ancient churches with their collections of "icons and precious stones without number". Of St. Demetrius' Cathedral in Vladimir ornamented with exquisite stone-carvings, N. N. Voronin, expert on Russian architecture, once said: "If stone could give utterance, that cathedral would be *The Lay of Igor's Host*". The walls, vaults and columns of the Church of Our Saviour of Nereditsa in Novgorod (which was destroyed by the fascists in the last war) were covered with frescoes depicting the Day of Judgement. But even to this gloomy subject the master craftsmen were able to bring touches of realism, as for example, in the representation of the rich man and the beggar Lazarus. The rich man sitting in the flames of hell begs Lazarus to give him water, but Satan gives him instead a jug of flame. The inscription reads: "Friend rich man, sup the hot flame!" Icon painting shows features of folk art that are close to portrait painting.

No less significant was the architecture of Galich and-Volyn. The Cathedral of the Dormition in

Vladimir-Volynsky and the royal palace in Galich, where stood the Church of St. Panteleimon famous for its portal, found stylistic echo in the royal palace of Andrei, son of Yuri Dolgoruky, in Bogoliubovo.

At Kholm, Prince Daniil Romanovich (13th century) ordered the building of three churches, ornamented with carved Galich white stone and Kholm green stone and with columns made from monolithic blocks. Nearby a tower was erected which was so white that it "shone on all sides".

Polotsk, Chernigov and Smolensk also developed fine architectural styles with their cast ornamented gates, their fine stone carving, their expressive icons, their melodious bells and their rare books. All these are visible monuments to the old Russian craftsmen.

The main cities had their chronicles. The first of these was the famous *Tale of Bygone Years* (12th century) which begins its story back in the mists of time. Reading these accounts today that are contained in the chronicles of Kiev, Novgorod, Vladimir, Galich and Pereyasavl—these being the only ones which have been preserved—we cannot help being amazed at the cultural maturity of their writers and compilers. They had a high regard for "bookish learning", for a "mind without books is like a bird without wings". Books were always held in great respect in Rus as can be seen by the fact that there are over 100,000 manuscripts dating from the 11th to the 18th centuries in major museum archives in the Soviet Union.

The common people were opposed to the quarrels and strife between the princes. They treasured the memory of the former unity of Rus, when the great warriors from different cities—men like the "fervent" Dunai from Galich, Ilya from Murom, Mikhailo Kazarin from Volyn, Alyosha from Rostov and Dobrynia from Ryazan—fought against their common enemies. Their names were kept in the collective memory of the people to remind them of their own valour and glory. The *bylinas* (Russian epics), the chronicles, the eloquent sermons of Illarion of Kiev, the "Russian Chrysostom" Kirill of Turov, the connoisseur of Homer, Aristotle and Plato, Kliment of Smolensk, who was "a reader and philosopher such as there would never again be on Russian soil", the edifying stories of the *Paterikon* about the lives of the Pechera monks, the didactic *Instruction of Vladimir Monomakh*, the bitter *Supplication of Daniil the Exile* and, finally, *The Lay of*

Russia

Igor's Host—these are but a few examples of this priceless cultural heritage.

"Look not at me, but at my soul," wrote Daniil the Exile. Knowledge of oneself was highly valued: "Better try yourself than your neighbours", for it was believed in the didactic literature that man had no innate qualities: "We cannot say that this is innately 'good', and that is 'bad'. Both the 'good' can be 'bad' and the 'bad' can be 'good'. There is no such thing as a righteous man."

But for all the undoubted growth in interest towards man, the doctrine of the Church, which held that knowledge was limited, was predominant. The holy scriptures, the lives of the saints, the icons and the cathedrals were stages not towards the understanding of this world, but towards the salvation of an inevitably sinful soul.

Excavating the ancient sites and removing grain by grain the sands of time Soviet archaeologists have discovered the water-pipes and roadways, the furnaces and forges, the swords and ploughshares, the chess-pieces and skis, the alphabet books and toys. The "birch-bark" letters also discovered by archaeologists have provided a wealth of valuable information. More than 600 have been found in Novgorod, and many others have been found in Pskov, Smolensk, Polotsk, Vitebsk and Staraya Russa. Reading them we can hear the voices of the ordinary people with their day to day cares. These discoveries have completely destroyed the myth that Ancient Rus was nothing but a cultural backwater.

The author of *The Lay of Igor's Host* expressed the popular understanding of the history of Rus. He angrily condemned the quarrels between the princes in which the heritage of the preceding generations had perished. Russian land for him was the whole of Rus, from Taman on the Black Sea to the Baltic, from the Danube to the Volga. At a time when "the cries in the fields of Rus came less from the ploughmen than from armed enemies..." he praised peace-time labour. He used the latter's imagery to depict one of the bloodiest internecine battles fought between the princes on the Nemiga:

*"On the Nemiga they bale up heads like straw
And lives they cast to the threshing floor,
With flails of damask steel they thresh
And winnow the souls from the living flesh."*

Chapter III

The Lay of the Ruin of the Russian Land (13th century) eulogises the countryside, the towns and villages and the wealth of Rus. In European literature of this period only Petrarch's sonnet, "Italia Mia", gives a similar glorification of the Motherland.

The people who created culture through the mouths of their poets and writers called for national unity in the name of work and peace, and for the defence of their country. The lack of such unity was fateful for the subsequent destiny of Rus.

The Mongol-Tatar invasion. A terrible ordeal fell to the lot of Rus. She was forced to fight a war on two fronts: against the Mongol-Tatar hordes from the east and against the crusading knights from six countries in the west.

The Mongol state arose in the depths of Inner Asia in 1206 with its capital at Karakorum. From there the Mongol khans pushed out the nomadic hordes for the conquest of Asia, Europe and the whole of the known world. Under their leader, Genghis Khan, the strictly disciplined Mongol troops rapidly overran Siberia, North-West China (including Peking), Central Asia and the Caucasus.

Cultural treasures that had been stored up over the centuries were brutally destroyed. Khodzhent, Bukhara, Samarkand and Gandzha, and hundreds of other towns were, in the words of a contemporary, "wiped from the face of the earth like the lines of a letter are erased from paper". Their populations were killed or driven into slavery, their lands ravaged.

When the Mongol armies entered the Northern Black Sea coastal region, they faced an army that was made up of troops from Kiev, Galich, Volyn, Chernigov, Smolensk and other towns. But the Russian princes and their Polovtsian allies, being unable to agree a strategy amongst themselves, suffered a severe defeat at the River Kalka (1223). In that "sore and savage slaughter" six princes fell and only one in ten of the soldiers returned to tell the tale. But the gallant resistance put up by the Russian soldiers against this first invasion could not but fill the minds of the foreign chroniclers, particularly Thomas of Split, with admiration.

After a long period of preparation the Mongol armies crossed the Volga in 1236 under Batu Khan with the intention of conquering Europe. Rus, like the other countries overrun by the Mongols, was not united. If it had been possible to unite the

armies of all the Russian princes, a force of over one hundred thousand could have faced and defeated the enemy. But the problem with the Russian princes was their alienation from each other. Even so, for a period of three years from 1237 to 1240 the Russian people bravely tried to defend their land. The battle on the River Sit, and the defence of Rязан, Vladimir, Moscow, Smolensk, Kozelsk and Kiev are but a few of the landmarks in that heroic struggle.

For ten weeks Voivode Dmitr beat back assaults against Kiev, and when the enemy finally entered the city they found it in ruins. In all that enormous capital no more than 200 houses were still left standing. Thousands of the inhabitants had been killed, and those left alive were driven to the countries of the nomads.

These events in Rus struck panic to the hearts of the Catholic rulers in Europe, which was then split through mutual enmity between the Pope and the German emperor, who had done nothing for the defence of the continent.

But the gallant struggle waged by Rus and the resistance put up by Poland, Hungary, Bohemia and the Balkan states frustrated Batu Khan's plans. The broad offensive that had begun on the wide spaces of the Volga region petered out on the shores of the Adriatic. And once he had realized this Batu Khan hurriedly withdrew his armies beyond the Volga (1242). Europe had been saved.

The Mongol hordes continued their devastation of Rus, in the midst of which came a new threat from the west—an invasion by German and Danish knights, supported by the man who had first inspired the Crusades, the Pope of Rome.

The attack of the Baltic area and the subsequent invasion of Rus, Poland and Lithuania were undertaken by the German crusaders at a time when the war waged by their former crusading allies, the Franks among them, in Western Asia was still at its height. The crusaders advanced on the Baltic area after the Sultan of Egypt, Saladin, with a united force of Egyptians, Syrians, and Mesopotamians had defeated the knights and driven them out of Beirut, Jerusalem (1187) and a number of other cities. On the Mediterranean and Baltic coasts and subsequently in the Bosphorus the crusading armies fought under the direction of the Papal Curia, which was then a powerful force of reaction in the

world, collecting annually enormous sums to finance the Crusades and understanding full well the interconnection between their various targets. The crusaders in the Baltic region could be sure of finding a large reinforcement in manpower and supplies from other countries, and this was in no small way due to the fact that the crusade against Rus and Lithuania was officially declared by the Papal Curia to be the same as the crusades against the Arabs. This meant that all participants were given remission of sins and all other privileges. At times the same Papal legates were in charge of the operations of different Crusades.

German pressure on the east had long been exerted. The knights had already conquered Estonia and Latvia, where they had formed a feudal colonial state, known as the Livonian Order (1202) which had its capital at Vendena, together with an allied diocese with its centre at Riga. In the north the Swedish feudal lords, who had taken Finland and part of Estonia, had established themselves at Revel (1219) and also constituted a threat to Rus. Gathered together under the banner of the Catholic Church the knights longed for an opportunity to seize the Russian lands that had remained intact from the greedy grasp of the Mongols. But their plans too were destined to flounder.

On July 15, 1240, Alexander Yaroslavich, Prince of Novgorod, led a small force to victory over the Swedish knights under Ulf Fasi on the River Neva in the mouth of its tributary, the River Izhora, where their flotilla was moored. Alexander himself fought with the Swedish commander and "lay his mark upon his forehead with the point of his spear". The prince's comrades-in-arms were "terrifying in the fury of their valour" as they defended their country. For his bravery in battle the people henceforth called the prince "Nevsky". From Ratmir, one of the prince's followers who died on the Neva, the Pushkin family traced its descent.

But the victory on the Neva was only part of the great task of defending Rus. For by that time the German knights aided by boyar treachery had taken and sacked Pskov and a fair sized portion of Novgorod territory.

On April 5, 1242, a combined force from Novgorod and Suzdal commanded by Alexander Nevsky met the army of the German knights on the ice of Lake Peipus (Chudskoye). The latter were re-

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soundingly defeated, "and great was the carnage," wrote the chronicler. With the help of hydrologists and using aerial photographs archaeologists have been able to form a picture of the battle in which the iron-clad wedge of German knights broke through the Russian barrier only to be caught in a pincer movement and utterly wiped out. Four hundred Teutonic knights met their deaths here, and those who survived were taken prisoner.

The inhabitants of Pskov met the victorious army with songs of praise. The German onslaught against the east had been checked. An economic blockade of Rus from the sea had been averted. These victories made the subsequent struggle against the Mongol hordes that much easier.

Three years later in another part of Rus yet another glorious victory was won. Here the rulers of Hungary and Poland with the blessing of the Pope began an offensive against Galich-Volyn principedom. They took Peremyshl and laid siege to Yaroslavl. But on August 17, 1245, the forces of Prince Daniil Romanovich arrived to deliver an unexpected blow to the enemy outside the walls of Yaroslavl. Both the Hungarian and the Polish Voivodes, Philja and Florian, were taken prisoner. Also captured was Philja's banner, which Prince Daniil in his wrath tore to pieces. By this victory Rus was assured the security of the western borders of Galich-Volyn Rus for at least 100 years, a fact which was to be of paramount importance in the struggle waged by the Principality of Muscovy for its independence. The Crusade against Rus had collapsed.

But ravaged and weakened by the Tatar-Mongol invasion, the country was forced to bow beneath the bitter yoke of the Golden Horde. The invasion and its aftermath wrought innumerable sufferings on the Russian people. The destruction and squandering of the country's wealth set back its cultural development for more than a century and a half. Many of the towns and cities fell into decay. The peoples whose struggle for liberation had defended European civilization were now by the irony of fate doomed to a long period of backwardness; their land was divided up among the rulers of the Mongol hordes and the Ulas states (Khanates).

On their return from the European expedition Batu Khan and his nobles settled on the lower Volga, where they formed a nomadic state, which was called the Golden Horde and which had its cap-

ital at Sarai (1243). The lands under the control of the Golden Horde stretched from the Irtysh to the Danube and included the Volga area, Khorezm, the Crimea, the Northern Caucasus and Moldavia.

But the conquests of Genghis Khan and his successors brought no benefits to the Mongolian people. The plundered goods did nothing to aid the rise of that country (whose population actually diminished), being merely squandered by the ruling nobility. The position of Rus as a world power worsened considerably. She lost her possessions on the Black Sea, the Baltic and the Volga. Contacts with the Caucasus and Central Asia were lost for many years to come. In the mid-14th century South-West Rus, known as the Ukraine, was seized by Poland, Lithuania and Hungary, which also had control over Carpathian Rus. Lithuania joined the lands of Byelorussia and Smolensk. Rus with great difficulty held on to the Neva estuary and eastern Karelia, the western part having been taken by Sweden. The German knights seized Estonia (1227) and Latvia (1290)—countries which had had long historic ties with Rus—and set up a state known as the Livonian Order. In Prussia which they took in 1283 they established the Teutonic Order. At the cost of enormous sacrifice Rus held on to Pskov against repeated invasions from the Livonian knights and attacks from Lithuania.

But time passed and the country gradually recovered from the destruction. The people worked to build towns and cities from the ruins and the ashes, and from these the struggle for liberation first began to be fought. The sufferings of the Russian people had not broken their will for independence. From the mid to the late 13th century waves of revolt against the Golden Horde broke out all over Rus—in Novgorod, Pskov, Vladimir, Yaroslavl, Rostov, Ustyug, and Kursk.

Aware of the difficult position in which Rus found herself the Papal Curia tried to exploit this for its own ends. Unafraid of "pairing a snake with a dove", Rome began talks with the pagan Mongols that were aimed at getting them to accept Catholicism. This was so as to prevent an attack on Rome's allied states in Europe and to get control over the Russian Church via the khans. But at the same time the Pope also sent envoys to Rus encouraging the princes to take up arms against the Golden Horde. The purpose of this double intrigue was clear: to

involve Rus in yet more destruction and to seize for itself whatever was left. Papal envoys also visited the court of Alexander Nevsky, but their requests were refused outright. He realized that there was only one way for the political development and renaissance of Rus, and this she subsequently achieved through the leadership of Moscow.

The beginning of national renaissance. Moscow was the centre for the unification of the Russian lands. The city itself had grown up at a point where the lands of the Vyatichi and the Krivichi tribes met. These tribes which since time immemorial had ploughed, hunted and farmed wild honey on their lands, were two of the original 14 East Slav tribes that formed Ancient Rus. Moscow was one of the 300 towns and fortresses in Ancient Rus and was first mentioned in the Lavrenty Chronicles in the year 1147.

Originally it was an estate which belonged to a boyar named Kuchka. According to legend Prince Yuri Dolgoruky, a son of Monomakh who ruled the region, killed Kuchka and ordered Moscow to be strengthened with a wooden fortress—the Kremlin (1156). Muscovy became one of the most important principalities in Vladimir-Suzdal Rus.

Moscow was not a big town, but being in an area where farming was relatively developed and which produced a wide variety of goods and traded with Europe, the Caucasus and the Arab world, it became a centre in the struggle waged by Yuri Dolgoruky's successors for unification of the country.

Half a century passed after the destruction wrought by the Golden Horde. The country gradually began to recover, largely due to the efforts of the Russian peasant. "Where the axe, the scythe and the plough were to be found", there the life of the Russian people began anew. During the 14th and 15th centuries Russian farming saw the introduction of a number of important innovations like the wooden plough with a tail furrow leveller, the effective use of manure as a fertilizer and the spread of the fallow-based grain growing system. The villages which produced handicrafts and conducted trade developed into new towns like Radonezh, Ruza, Vereya, Borovsk, Serpukhov and Kashira. New stone fortresses were built—Koporye, Yam-Gorodok, Orekhov, Korela, Ladoga, Izborsk, Pskov and Porkhov—to form the north-west defence belt.

Moscow grew rapidly as the centre of a principality (1247). As has been mentioned, it lay in a developed farming area and had been known for its crafts and trade. It stood at the intersection of a number of trade routes and at a considerable distance from the border areas that were constantly subject to attack from the Mongols or the Lithuanians. It was the natural centre for the Russian lands proper, in which the Great Russian people was formed. The Muscovites supported the struggle of the Grand Prince of Muscovy Ivan Kalita (1325-1340) and his successors for the political supremacy of their city and for the unity of the Russian lands against the separatist desires of the boyars and the incursions of various enemies. The Muscovy princes were not yet particularly powerful—Ivan Kalita, for example, had only some fifty villages—but they skilfully continued the policy bequeathed by Alexander Nevsky. Prince Ivan was a calculating and careful politician, and it is not surprising that he was nicknamed "Kalita", the Money-Bag.

The state organs of power and control became gradually stronger. The prince held council with the boyars' *duma* while his local governors were given the right of *kormleniye*, which allowed them to have part of the taxes collected in a town or a *volost*. The princes' courts were run by various courtiers and servants.

Rus still had no absolute ruler. Relations between the principalities and between the various princes were regulated by treaties over which the participants were required to take an oath in the form of kissing the Cross. But neither the treaties nor the oaths were sufficient to stop disputes between the princes over land and revenue, especially since these were being deliberately fanned by the khans who were out to weaken Rus. Nevertheless, the gradual growth of landed property and the fact that the Muscovy boyars, courtiers and merchants had penetrated the Grand Principality of Vladimir and other lands prepared the ground for their subsequent unification under Moscow.

The increasing importance of Moscow as the capital of a great principality was primarily due to the military and diplomatic struggle waged by the Russian people against the Golden Horde. By the time of the Mongol-Tatar invasion, North-East Rus was a confederation of 11 principalities with the Grand Prince of Vladimir at its head. The Horde tried to

rule Rus through Vladimir which possessed the economically developed lands of Vladimir itself, Pereyaslav-Zalessky, Yuriev and Kostroma. This rule brought in considerable revenue. But as the country began to get back on its feet, other centres began to grow in importance and at various times princes from Moscow, Tver, Ryazan, Suzdal and Nizhni Novgorod occupied the throne of Vladimir.

Their power was weakened severely by the invasion and by the heavy burden of tribute they were required to provide, while the Horde skilfully exploited the struggles between the princes themselves for the throne and title of grand prince and the lands, revenues and rights that went with it to inflame internecine discord between the princes, who frequently settled their bloody accounts at the khan's court in Sarai. Not infrequently the Horde used military force with the result that such names as Mamai, Toktamish, Timur and Ögedey have become notorious in history as the destroyers of Russian lands. In such conditions of cruelty and brutality were the people faced with the task of resurrecting their country, while their nomadic overlords tried with fire, sword, bondage and crippling taxation to push it back and hold on to their power.

Against this the Muscovy princes and their entourage pursued a skilful diplomacy that took account of the new economic renaissance of the country.

As the lands of the Grand Principality of Muscovy grew economically, the boyars began to take root there. Moscow began increasingly to attract the local feudal nobility, who were intimidated by the growing resistance of the peasants to oppression. This resulted subsequently (under Dmitri Donskoy) in a merger between the grand principalities of Muscovy and Vladimir and in the strengthening of both royal and state forms of feudal ownership.

The Muscovy rulers were able to develop the traditional diplomatic skills they had inherited from Ancient Rus and apply them to the new and extremely difficult conditions. Their purpose was to use the traditional political institutions like the unity of the royal dynasty, the seigniorage of the Grand Prince, the assemblies of the princes, the synods of the higher clergy and the whole system of lay and clerical vassalage, institutions which were recognized by the Golden Horde since it had been unable to break them, to slowly but surely bring

about the unity and renaissance of the country.

The economic growth of Muscovy is attested to by the stable and large-scale minting of silver coins which began in the early 1370s. This provides an indication of the growth of intra-city and general Russian trading ties.

The Battle of Kulikovo. By 1380 Mamai Khan, who then ruled the Golden Horde on the right bank of the Volga, was facing difficulties. In the capital, Sarai, Toktamish, backed by Kok-Orda and the mighty Timur (Tamerlane), replaced Arab-Shah. Toktamish held the main centres on the left bank—the capital, Sarai (ad-Djedid), Old Sarai (al-Mahrus) and Hadji Tar Khan. Mamai Khan therefore placed his hopes for strengthening his own position in the Volga Area on an expedition against Muscovy which would bring in revenue and men for his armies. According to the chronicles, he insisted on the payment of a tribute at the amount set under Janibeg Khan and not according to the agreement subsequently made with Dmitri, then Grand Prince of Muscovy, which evidently would have been less. As far as one can tell by the confused and contradictory written and oral sources, he gained the military support of the Grand Principality of Lithuania and was given an assurance as to the neutrality of Ryazan, if not its open military commitment. At the same time Oleg Ivanovich, the Prince of Ryazan, considered it also necessary to maintain relations with Dmitri and warned him of the khan's intrigues. Mamai Khan also used mercenaries from the subject lands of the Volga Area, the Crimea and the Caucasus (these were Armenians, Circassians, Burtases and Bulgarians). According to Boris Uralnis, a Soviet statistician, this motley army, which consisted largely of nomads, amounted to 60,000.

The army of Muscovy consisted of the force of the Grand Prince, the forces of the vassal princes, at least 14 regiments from the cities and infantry levies raised from the people. It was an army drawn from all over Rus and joined by Lithuanian and Russian forces from Polotsk and Trubchevsk.

The numerical strength of the Russian army according to chronicles reached the fantastical figure of 428,000 and the subsequent losses, 250,000. Correspondingly the figure for fallen boyars and *voivodes* fluctuates from 400 to 600. However, all sources quote the same figures on boyars and *voivodes*

from Moscow (40), Suzdal (50) and Murom (40) who fell in battle.

The troops were assembled at Kolomna. To the sound of "many trumpets of martial voice" the troops were reviewed and assigned to their various regiments. They began to march on August 20, 1380. Mamai Khan stood with his host "in a field near the Don" waiting for the arrival of his ally, Jagiello, with troops from Lithuania. The Russians sent out three units of scouts to gather intelligence about Mamai and the last of these, led by a boyar named Semyon Melik, reported that Mamai had issued orders around the Ulus khanates that nothing was to be sown or ploughed "for he would spend the autumn on Russian crops". These crops turned out to be a harvest of bitter wormwood. Jagiello arrived almost a day later and it may be assumed that this was not without good reason—he had almost no reliable forces, for neither Byelorussia nor the Ukraine (Kiev, Chernigov, Volyn), which had suffered all the horrors of the Golden Horde invasions and only recently withdrawn from an Ulus khanate, and which had had close ties with Rus since ancient times, were in no way interested either in promoting Eastern expansion or in helping the pro-Catholic Jagiello to triumph.

Mamai Khan remained waiting by the Don. Prince Dmitri decided to march his men along the Oka to forestall Jagiello. His right flank was protected by the forces of Dmitri and Andrei, sons of Algirdas, from an attack by Jagiello. At Lopasnya the units of the Russian army met, forced their way across the Oka, where they were joined by the forces of Dmitri and Andrei, and moved towards the Don. On arrival there they held military council at which the main question under discussion was whether or not to cross the river. Some feared that if they were to cross and came under heavy attack their retreat would be cut off; others on the contrary saw the river as offering protection against a rear attack from the Lithuanians or the Ryazan troops. The battle was felt to be decisive and that, whatever its outcome, it would determine the fate of the Russian army and most probably of Rus itself. Prince Dmitri ordered bridges to be built across the Don and for ways of fording the river to be found. In the thick fog that lay over the river on the night of 8 September the Russian forces crossed the Don and encamped on the Kulikovo Field, which lay at the

point where the Nepryadva flowed into the Don.

In the subsequent three-hour battle the main leaders on the Russian side were Prince Dmitri, his closest boyar, Mikhail Brenok, Vladimir Andreyevich who led the ambush regiment, and Dmitri Bobrok from Volyn. These commanders were aided by various princes and voivodes.

According to tradition the battle began with a duel between the two warriors, one on each side—the Russian, Peresvyet, and the Tatar, Temir-Mirza, both of whom were killed, the former being subsequently buried at St. Simeon's Monastery in Moscow. This was followed by an all-out battle in which the losses were great on both sides.

After an initial skirmish between the Russian patrol and vanguard regiments and Mamai's light cavalry, there followed a frontal clash between the main forces. The Russians were hard pressed and Mikhail Brenok fell beneath the Grand Prince's banner. The right wing beat back the onslaught, but the left was crushed and forced to retreat to the Nepryadva having lost all its voivodes. This was because some of the new recruits who had never fought in battle before gave way.

Then the ambush regiment, which had been barely restrained by Voivode Dmitri till the final decisive moment, went into battle. Mamai Khan suffered an overwhelming defeat.

The Russians lost a number of princes, several hundred boyars and such a vast number of ordinary soldiers that according to the chroniclers they could not all be counted. Mamai fled without his army or his belongings. Prince Dmitri, whose armour had been pierced all over, rode around the battlefield where ordinary soldiers lay dead alongside princes. Among the fallen was the scout, Semyon Melik.

Then Prince Dmitri ordered the trumpets to be sounded and called the people to bury the dead. For eight days the Russian soldiers buried their dead. Jagiello, who had learned of the outcome of the battle while at Odoyevo, plundered the Russian rear guard (that at least is how the German chronicles vaguely described it) and turned back. The forty-thousand-strong population of Moscow welcomed the victors with the ringing of bells, and the people gave Grand Prince Dmitri the title of "Donskoy".

The centuries have passed, but the Soviet people who well understand the value of freedom re-

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vere the memory of their brave ancestors. The memorial that was erected over a hundred years ago on the Kulikovo Field to the sacrifices made by the Russian people is carefully maintained.

The Battle of Grünwald. This marked the beginning of the decline of the German Teutonic Order. Like the Livonian Order, the Teutonic Order had been formed in the 13th century after the seizure of Polish and Lithuanian lands in the Baltic area between the Vistula and the Niemen.

It was a feudal-colonial state. The plunder and conquests of the two Orders in the Baltic area did nothing to help the German people and only resulted in the formation there of an economic bulwark for the most reactionary part of the German ruling class. Furthermore, they gave rise to continual political and national contradictions and wars, which weakened not only Poland, Lithuania and Rus, but ultimately Germany as well. The uprisings of the Prussians, Latvians and Estonians were drenched in blood, but this could not go on forever.

Two centuries passed and the national states in Rus, Poland and Lithuania now much stronger began to demand restoration of their positions in the Baltic area. And one of the decisive events on the way to this was the Battle of Grünwald (July 15, 1410). The allied forces were commanded by Polish-Lithuanian King, Jagiello. The right flank was held by the Lithuanian-Slav troops under Prince Witold, the left by the Polish forces under Zyndram of Maszkowic. The allied army also included Bohemian and Moravian units under Jan Salava and Jan the Sokol.

The precise numerical strength of the troops who went to battle in the broad depression near Grünwald is not known, since our main source, the Polish chronicler Jan Dlugosz, only mentions the number of standards and the number of troops under each standard could vary. Witold had forty standards, four of which contained his own Lithuanian soldiers and 36 of which had Ukrainian, Byelorussian and Russian troops. Jagiello had 51 standards, seven of which contained Ukrainian troops. The Order had 51 also. The allies were not only equal to the Order from the economic and military point of view, they also had considerable moral superiority. They had long awaited the day when they could bring the Teutonic knights to account for the evil they had wrought.

The allies fought bravely and inflexibly. The chronicler Jan Dlugosz makes particular mention of the role of the three standards from Smolensk at the decisive moment in the battle, who provided the link in the chain between the Polish and Lithuanian-Russian troops. Under the command of the Lithuanian Prince, Semyon-Lingevin Olgerdovich they heroically withstood the knights' frontal attack.

The knights were completely routed. All the chiefs of the Order were killed, including the Grand Master, Ulrich von Jungingen, and 51 banners were taken.

The Battle of Grünwald was highly acclaimed in Rus. The Novgorod chronicles note that it was not an easy victory and that "many Christians, Lithuanians and Poles were killed by the Teutons".

To some extent Lithuania's success was due to her links with Hussite Bohemia, where for a long time a Lithuanian contingent had served under Vitautas, who was nicknamed "Bohemian King".

The fate of the Teutonic Order was decided. Half a century later it was reduced to being merely a vassal of Poland (1466) and many of the lands it had seized were restored to Lithuania and Poland.

Andrei Rublyov—herald of the renaissance of national Great Russian culture. The victory at Kulikovo gave rise to a cultural renaissance. Over the course of centuries the Great Russian people had gradually been formed into one nation with its own rich and varied material culture and its own ethnic creative talents.

The craftsmen of Moscow were highly skilled. Whatever their medium, whether wood, stone, clay, iron, silver or gold, they could make everything necessary for the growing city, and if needed even go to other towns to help out their fellow craftsmen. Thus in 1420 when the citizens of Pskov were looking for craftsmen to renovate their cathedral they found them in Moscow instead of among the Germans.

Unfortunately, the names of only a few of these masters have come down to us, like the two Moscow scribes, Melenti and Proksha, who in 1339 rewrote the Siya Gospel, and a certain Ivan, who illustrated it with miniatures, illuminations and initial letters in the terratological style.

The Russian master craftsmen worked together with visiting craftsmen from Byzantium and the South Slav regions.

Even such handicrafts as embroidery frequently produced works of art. The tapestry of the Moldavian Princess Elena, the wife of Dmitri, grandson of Ivan III, which depicts him with his family, is a work of art "painted with a needle".

The numerous examples of ornamental metal-carving show that for all the different borrowings found in Russian applied art, it still retained its purity and individuality of style. This can easily be seen from the facial portraits, ornaments and inscriptions that decorate the Gospels and the icons; from the Russian historical figures introduced into the iconographic system of depicting patron saints on crosses, urns, panagias (*encolpia*) and icon pendants; from the type of liturgical ornaments used in the Russian Church, like the special chalices and thuribles; and from the kind of utensils that were specifically used in Russian households—the scoops (*kovsh*), the wine bowls (*bratina*) and the goblets (*chara*).

The best and finest work went to form part of the grand prince's regalia—his belt, cap, shoulder mantle and pendant icon-cross that hung on a rich chain.

The cultural upsurge of the country can be clearly seen in the development of the chronicles and other writings on contemporary events. Parchment, which was too expensive to be used for the growing practice of record-keeping, began gradually to be replaced by paper, which in its turn aided the growth of literacy.

The culminating point of Russian culture during this period was the work of Andrei Rublyov. Rublyov, who lived through both the Battle of Kulikovo, and the Battle of Grünwald, was an artist who stood at the fount of Russian humanism. His appeal was to the thinking and feeling man, and thus he invariably overstepped the norms of church dogma which fettered creative thought. His greatest masterpieces include the icons, *The Trinity* and *Our Saviour*, murals in the cathedrals in the Moscow Kremlin as well as in the St. Sergius Trinity Monastery outside Moscow and in churches and monasteries in Vladimir, and many other works of art recognized throughout the world. His school of icon painting was to last for centuries. The St. Andronik Monastery in Moscow, where Rublyov worked for many years, now contains an historical and artistic museum devoted to his works.

Rublyov was highly acclaimed by secular and clerical powers alike as the advocate through his artistic works of social harmony, peace and brotherhood in the present life. To the people he was beloved as the creator of the artistically expressed ideal of true brotherhood in the future. The common people saw in Rublyov's deeply national works a reflection of their own faith in the triumph of justice. And now 600 years later the great masterpieces that he created live on and continue to give joy to mankind. Romain Rolland wrote, on seeing *The Trinity*, that Rublyov's works expressed the greatest purity and harmony in painting.

The cultural renaissance of Russia utilized the finest traditions of South Slav writing, Byzantine art (Theophanes the Confessor), and architecture of Italian castles and churches.

It was Rublyov and his famous successor, Dionisy, who set the high standards of Russian easel painting, which put it in the same class as the best works of the Italian Renaissance. It was they who gave to the faces on religious icons an individuality of their own, and furthermore an individuality that was specifically Russian. The emotional forcefulness of their expression, as they stand surrounding the purely heavenly figures, fits astonishingly well into the historical events of the period, into all that Rus had gone through from its sufferings under the Golden Horde to the joys of national liberation and renaissance. For the Russians who lived during these times the icon was an historical work.

Social and political thought put forward ideas that became dominant in the thinking of the ruling powers. Primarily this was the idea that Muscovy was the heir to the political and cultural heritage of Ancient Rus. Subsequently it was supplemented by the idea of the world significance of Russia and of the princes of Muscovy as direct heirs to the might of Byzantium and Rome.

The Struggle for the Ways to the Baltic and Black Sea. The rulers in Moscow gave wholehearted support to the efforts of Novgorod and Pskov to defend the rights of Russian trade in the Baltic. After a stubborn struggle this right was at last granted under a treaty which was signed by King Magnus of Sweden and the grand prince of Muscovy in 1323. According to the treaty, Sweden granted "our guest a clear route on the sea". A similar treaty was signed by Norway in 1326. This treaty with Sweden,

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incidentally, also formed the basis of relations between Moscow and Stockholm during the period of the Russian centralized state, while the border established by the Russo-Norwegian treaty remains to this day.

But in exercising its equal rights to the sea Rus came up against stubborn resistance from the German Order and the Hansa. One hundred and fifty fortresses in Livonia supported the Order and a league of 72 cities backed the monopoly of the Hansa. The Hanseatic League deprived Rus of a "clear route on the sea", took enormous profit from the difference in weights and measures at the various places where goods were bought and sold, and prevented merchants from other countries getting through to the Russian market. But even so, economic development proved more powerful than bans. History shows that as the Moscow rulers grew in power Russian merchants penetrated the Livonian, Prussian, Danish, Norwegian and Swedish markets. The number of protected trade routes grew on both land and sea, and the frequent attempts by the Order to seize Russian lands only revealed its increasing weakness. The fact was that the Hanseatic League could not exist without Russian trade, as was clearly shown by the Livonian War.

For all its aggressiveness the Order was incapable of seizing Russian lands even when Rus was at its lowest ebb. And when the Grand Principality of Muscovy began to grow stronger under Ivan Kalita and particularly after the defeat of the Teutonic knights by the combined Lithuanian, Russian and Polish troops at the Battle of Grünwald, its chances were gone forever. As far as the Order was concerned the Russian border was unassailable. Relying on its system of strong fortifications Rus confidently withstood the frequent attempts on the part of the Order as well as of Denmark and Sweden to invade her territory.

Moscow more and more became the bulwark of Rus in the military and diplomatic struggles against her enemies and their allies. In the face of enormous obstacles the Moscow rulers cleverly undermined the trade blockade imposed upon her by sea through exploiting the centuries-old trade links between North-East Rus, or Muscovy as it was called by Europeans, with its 85 towns, and the Great Principality of Lithuania which contained some 80 towns in Byelorussia, the Ukraine and Great Rus-

sia. Gradually the Moscow rulers managed to get Russian goods and Russian merchants to Vilnius, Lvov, Poznan, Cracow, Kosice, Leipzig, Nuremberg and other European trade centres. Trading over long distances was far from easy. Even in the 15th century the trek along the old salt road from Moscow to Rome took about a year. The Metropolitan Isidorus left Moscow on September 2, 1437, to attend a church council in Ferrara, Italy. He travelled through Novgorod, Pskov, Derpt, Riga, Lübeck, Lüneburg, Bamberg, Nuremberg, Augsburg, Innsbruck, Trieste and Padua and arrived at Ferrara on August 18, 1438. It is interesting to note that he returned by a different, but equally ancient route: via Venice, Agram (Zagreb), Budapest and Cracow.

At the same time diplomats and merchants from Moscow set about restoring former trade relations with the Black Sea towns, which since the Mongol-Tatar invasion had become Italian (Genoan) colonies.

Gradually the Russian merchants revived their trade routes into the Volga Area (Povolzhye), the Black Sea (Oleshye, Belgorod-Akerman and other towns), the Northern Caucasus and even Central Asia, as is shown by the reception in Moscow of envoys from Hussein, ruler of Herat in 1490. The Russian colony in Constantinople was revived as merchants from Tver, Novgorod and Nizhni Novgorod as well as Moscow reached the city. An important role in arranging these commercial contacts was played by the Greek colony in Moscow which had its centre at the Monastery of St. Nicholas the Old. The rulers of Muscovy made extensive use both in trade and in politics of the services of the Genoese and Venetians.

As the Baltic, Lithuanian-Polish, southern and eastern trade routes became open Moscow gradually linked up the internal and external routes into a single network and thereby became the most important economic centre in the country.

Moscow-Muscovy-Russia. After the Battle of Kulikovo the state of "Russia" (this term as applied to Muscovite Rus first appeared in the 15th century) was formed as a multinational entity in so far as besides Russians it also had Karelians, Mordvians, Komi and other peoples.

Moscow itself had spread far beyond the confines of the Kremlin, which was now surrounded by a

large trading quarter (the future Kitai-Gorod), and now extended beyond the Neglinnaya, Yauza and Moskva rivers.

Surrounded by villages that belonged to the princes or the boyars and standing at the crossroads of the trade routes, Moscow became the main political centre housing the palaces of the princes and the boyars as well as the main institutions through which their power was exercised: the grand prince's palace, the treasury and the boyars' *duma* (assembly). Here judges, lawyers and the grand prince's courtiers passed sentence and meted out punishment to the peasants, the poor and the runaway serfs who had come to the city to find refuge from their masters.

The citizens of Moscow were a prominent economic and political force. The rich merchants traded with the West and the South. As in Europe they had strong connections with the grand prince's court, infiltrated the nobility, built magnificent mansions (like that of the merchant Tarakan in Moscow) and influenced the prince's choice of the *tysyatsky*, or dignitary who presided over the commercial court in Moscow. Later (in 1373) the office was replaced by the grand prince's governor-general. Together with the feudal nobility the merchants stood against the urban poor, who at times played a decisive role in their city's affairs as was the case in 1382 when the citizens themselves called a *veche* (popular assembly) to conduct the defence of Moscow against Toktamish. The free citizens, mostly artisans were formed together into "hundreds" and the dependent serfs, who belonged to the boyars and other feudal lords, into *byeliye slobody* or "white settlements" which were free of state taxation. The former had suffered considerably from the heavy taxes imposed on them by the treasury and the latter, from those imposed by their own masters.

The main streets of Moscow—Tverskaya, Yurievskaya, Volotskaya, Arbat, Ordynka, etc.—became roads that led to the country's main cities. Russian merchants, diplomats and pilgrims, particularly those from Moscow, began to journey abroad more frequently, not only to neighbouring countries, but to Italy, Asia Minor, India and Egypt, thus reflecting the country's growing interest in the outside world and its growing political and cultural ties abroad.

The thirst for knowledge led the Russian explor-

ers to far-off seas. Afanasy Nikitin, a merchant from Tver, visited the still unknown "wonderland" of India, wherefrom pearls came to Rus. A quarter of a century before Vasco da Gama he wrote his *Voyage Beyond Three Seas* (1468-1475), which contains an astonishing abundance of observations. A Russian patriot ("in this whole world there is no country like Russia"), Nikitin was opposed to any kind of religious intolerance ("What is the right faith? God knows."). He knew several oriental languages (his narration is filled with Persian, Arabic and Turkic words) and spent four years in India.

Nikitin mentions such details as the climate, the prices of goods, the fact that there were 84 religions and that people were restrained in their use of food. He was a perspicacious observer, describing the life and customs of that huge country in such a way that neither the luxury of the nobility, nor the abundance of towns—3-4 on every day's journey—nor the military might of the cavalry and combat elephants could blind him to the social inequality. Vassily Momyrev included this work in the Moscow chronicles.

At the same time Moscow was visited by many foreigners—merchants, envoys, architects and craftsmen of all kinds.

Russia's cultural upsurge was also accompanied by the appearance of a number of new technical innovations like the piston pump used in salt mining, gunpowder (1382), the first Kremlin clock (1404) and the casting of canons (1488).

Political theory in Moscow during the same period that the Reformation was taking place in Europe, advanced and developed the thesis that the Moscow princes inherited their powers and historical rights from the princes of Ancient Rus and that these in turn were heirs to the Byzantine kings and, as a counterpoise to the Lithuanian princely genealogies, to the Roman emperors. These ideas were put forward in a collection that was made soon after the reunification of Novgorod and entitled *The Tale of the Princes of Vladimir*, resolutely upholding the equality of Russia among the kingdoms and empires of contemporary Europe.

The same ideas also lay behind another famous monument to Russian culture, the Moscow Chronicles. These were first begun in the 14th century, but were later developed into extensive chronological works (1408, 1418, 1480) reflecting the stages of de-

velopment of the single state. They were compiled by the scribes of Metropolitans Cyprian and Foty, as well as by court chroniclers. A number of the more educated merchants also took part in their writing, for instance Vassily Yermolin, who was described as a "trades person" who knew several languages.

Like other countries in Europe, Russia made use of the heritage of the early Renaissance in Italy. Alongside Russian architects and town planners Ivan III invited Italian architects, engineers and craftsmen to Moscow to redesign the Kremlin, the country's main fortress. The famous Milanese architect, Pietro Antonio Solari, built fortifications according to the very latest designs in castle construction developed in Lombardy. He erected the Nikolskaya and Frolovskaya (now Spasskaya) towers, while fellow Italians Antonio Friazin and Marco Friazin built the Tainitskaya and Beklemisheva towers respectively. The latter also built the Palace of Facets.

Aristotle Fioravante from Bologna, who was ordered by Ivan III to study the ancient architecture of Vladimir, built the Cathedral of the Dormition in the style of the traditional Russian love for ornamentation, with five cupolas, pilasters and an arcadian belt. The Kremlin was turned into a first-rate fortress and an impressive centre for the capital of the new Russia.

It was in this environment that reformationist and humanist ideas began to develop. The scribe, Fyodor Kuritsyn, and a group of his followers published non-clerical stories, some of which they wrote themselves, which spread their belief in the value of the individual, rejected the official church doctrine and denounced its landed wealth.

At first these ideas found some support from Ivan III, but when they began to penetrate into a wider circle, the grand prince came out on the side of the Church and its militant ideologists, who followed the teachings of hegumen Iosif Volotsky. Those bold men who sought to stir the public conscience were damned and condemned as heretics at the church council in Moscow (1503), and in the following year they were burned at the stake. At this same council the official Church warded off attacks from the more moderate adherents of secularization, known as the *nestyazhateli* (nonmoney-grubbers), who were grouped around Nil Sorsky.

All told, that was a heavy blow against reformationist tendencies in social thought.

Having at first a pagan and then an Islamic Golden Horde in the east as well as a pagan and subsequently a Catholic state in Lithuania in the west, the Moscow princes were very careful in their attitude to religious matters.

The Pope for his part spoke out openly for the Catholic countries to wage war on the Mongols since they threatened Europe, but his actions and those of his West European allies were aimed at exploiting the Horde so as to extend his influence in Eastern Europe. The penetration of the Genoans into the Crimea, where they were granted by Sarai the privilege of trading in Kefe (Feodosiya) and subsequently in Sudak, made the Papal Curia's policy easier, inasmuch as its tentacles in the form of episcopates embraced Kefe, the Chersonese, Chembala, Tana and even Sarai itself.

The Grand Principality of Lithuania was a new factor in religious and political life. In the mid-14th century it exerted pressure on the Patriarch of Byzantium with the result that he took the first step towards separating the Russian metropolitanate into two parts, Russian and Lithuanian. But after the Battle of Kulikovo, Cyprian, a Bulgarian who had been sent by the Lithuanians to Moscow, cautiously and in a spirit of compromise cooperated with the Russian rulers in their policy of unification.

The feudal wars in Rus and in the Grand Principality of Lithuania brought about a new intensity in the religious struggle, which had been further complicated by the rapprochement between Constantinople and Rome. Isidorus the Greek, who had been appointed by the Russian Metropolitan, with a representative Russian delegation, attended the church council in Ferrara in 1438. Here he signed the Act of the Florence Union and was made cardinal and Papal envoy for the Grand Principality of Lithuania, Poland and Livonia. But on his return to Moscow he was arrested and declared a heretic (1441).

The Russian rulers affirmed that their political course was independent of Byzantium, and they prevented an attempt on the part of Lithuania and Poland to turn the Union into an instrument of practical policy. From 1448 onwards the metropolitan was appointed from the synod of Russian bishops and from that time foreigners were not al-

lowed to assume that office. The enormous size of the metropolitanate was an important factor in Moscow policy of gaining influence in Serbia, Bulgaria, Hungary and Moldavia.

After the fall of Constantinople (1453) the Russian rulers very cleverly neutralized the efforts of the Pope to get the Orthodox countries to join the Florence Union.

Ivan III looked far beyond the confines of his own country. When the Turks took Constantinople and the Byzantine Empire fell (1453), he married the last heiress to the Byzantine throne, Zoë (Sophia) Palaeologue (1472). The idea that was concealed in this act that Russia had been "chosen by God" was formulated by Filofei, a cleric from Pskov, in 1523 as follows: "Two Romes have fallen, a third stands. There will not be a fourth."

Russia, the Slavs and the Ottoman Empire. The rulers in Moscow opposed the Turkish attacks against Constantinople. They tried to use the Byzantine metropolitanate in their political struggle and they put a high value on the Byzantine market. Consequently, they had a large number of people at their disposal who were fully acquainted with Greek culture, economics and political life. Quite naturally they encouraged the work of enlightenment carried out by the Byzantine metropolitans in connection with such well-known Moscow monasteries as the Epiphany, the St. Simeon, and the St. Sergius Trinity Monastery. It was also quite natural that the country had a large number of highly educated people like Stefan Khrap (from Perm) and Epiphany the Wise, who were well versed in church and political affairs.

Russia's connections with the centres of South Slavic culture grew continually, as is reflected in the way their life and literature mutually influenced each other and in church contacts between Moscow and Tyrnov, Athos and other similar places. There are numerous examples of these connections and they relate to both material and artistic culture. Thus the clock in the Kremlin was made by a Serbian named Lazar from Athos in 1404, while another Serbian, Pachomius Lagothetus (who died c. 1480) was renowned in Moscow as an author of the lives of the Russian saints, a genre that was very popular at the time. On the other hand, Cyprian and Grigori Tsemblak, both of whom were Bulgarians, became Russian metropolitans. The Russian

rulers gave their continual support to the Orthodox monks on Athos. Russian scribes worked in Serbia and a Serbian scholar, Konstantin from Kostenchi, who wrote *Legends of the Alphabet* also wrote of the importance of the Russian language.

The Turkish conquest of Bulgaria (1393, 1396), Serbia (1389, 1459) and the Balkans resulted in a steep decline of South Slav culture that can only be compared to the effects of the Mongol-Tatar invasion on Russia. It is significant that at a time that was at first difficult for Russia and subsequently for her South Slav neighbours, these countries and peoples tried to resurrect their common heritage and mutually enrich it. They found cultural support in each other and ultimately, with the active support of Moscow, formed a cultural tradition, the importance of which in the subsequent centuries-long struggle for national independence is inestimable.

The reunification of Moscow and Novgorod—a major step towards unity. Under Ivan III (1462-1505) Moscow became the capital of a single centralized state. It was clear that getting rid of the Golden Horde, pushing Lithuania and Poland back from the ancient Russian lands they had taken, protecting trade on the Volga, regaining outlets to the Baltic and the Black Sea and above all defending the growing class of the nobility from the threat of the peasant axe required the rule of one man backed up by a powerful army.

The reunification of Novgorod and Moscow was an important step towards this goal. Novgorod was a major North European trading and craft centre, and its vast region contained some twenty towns. As in neighbouring Pskov a substantial stratum of provincial boyars had long existed. These for the most part controlled the fur trade, selling in Novgorod tens of thousands of pelts from Karelia, the Dvina and Lake Onega areas as well as dozens of tons of wax and other commodities to merchants from the Baltic countries. With the support of the citizens' assembly the boyars' councils virtually controlled the city.

Economically both Novgorod and Pskov leaned towards Muscovy, taking bread from the Volga area in exchange for their own and imported manufactured goods. Novgorod was frequently disturbed by popular uprisings and many a boyar's mansion were burned in the "great riots", while their inhabi-

tants were hurled to their deaths in the Volkhov by the rioting peasants.

The boyars sought support from the powerful prince of Muscovy, but at the same time wanted to protect their own lands and revenues from his greedy hands. They also looked to Lithuania and even at the very end of Novgorod's independence concluded a military alliance with Vilnius. But despite all the efforts of Lithuania, Poland, the Order and the Hanseatic League, they could not prevent the spread of Moscow's power into North-West Rus.

An end to this was finally put by Ivan III. Novgorod was placed under Moscow by force of arms and "all-Russia orders" were introduced. The bell which tolled for the popular assembly was ordered to be taken down and brought to Moscow (1478). The possessions of the richest local boyars were taken over by Ivan III and his own nobles who went to live in the reunified areas. Soon afterwards Novgorod's fate was shared by the principality of Tver (1485) and later, under the reign of Vassily III, Pskov (1510). The chronicler of Pskov wrote that the grand prince's governors "thirsted much for blood" and life became unbearable, but nothing could be done since "the earth will not open, and we cannot fly away".

The formation of a centralized state encouraged the rulers in Moscow to undertake the paramount task of solving the Baltic question. Among all the various problems that faced foreign policy international trade was a matter of outstanding importance. Moscow did not recognize the Livonian Order and had relations with it only through the governor of Novgorod, while the treaties it signed with Livonia, the Hanseatic League and Derpt were concluded via Novgorod and Pskov.

The first steps of the Moscow rulers already showed their clear intention to fight for the complete return of Ancient Rus's lands and that the days of Teutonic and Hanseatic domination in the Baltic were numbered. In 1492 Ivan III ordered the building of a fortress, which he called Ivan-Gorod, on the Narva. According to the public register for 1498 Ivan-Gorod had 165 houses (four or five of which belonged to merchants) and 198 inhabitants: a further 20 or 30 houses lay just outside the fortress. In 1494 he ordered the closing of the Hanseatic office in Novgorod, thereby giving the Ger-

mans to understand that he intended to cast off the golden yoke of foreign middlemen from Russian trade.

By successful military operations conducted between 1480 and 1481 and again between 1501 and 1503 Russia forced the Order and the Hanseatic League to do away with the blatant discrimination they practised in trade, which Novgorod and Pskov had tried so long and so unsuccessfully to fight against. As time went by the Baltic question gradually developed into something affecting the whole of Europe and the fate of Byelorussia and the Ukraine were inextricably bound up with it.

After a series of wars with the Grand Principality of Lithuania, the Russian border was by 1503 advanced to a line which ran from Chernigov through Gomel and Starodub to Bryansk. The decisive clashes were still to come.

Having united the country the rulers in Moscow changed the whole system of government which had previously been varied in character. The union of the different lands headed by the grand prince was replaced by the single state. Instead of a motley series of treaties with various vassal princes a single administrative system was set up. The former appanage princes lost their lands and were reduced to the level of service landowners. It is worth pointing out here that despite the conclusions that were current among historians of the Russian pre-revolutionary "state school", the landowners were by no means of equivalent status to the peasants in terms of their service to the state. The means of existence for all types of service people came from the same source—forced peasant labour.

In the capital itself "tripartite" administration was replaced by the single rule of the grand prince. The political structure became more complex. Besides the boyar *duma* (assembly) power was also exercised by the *dyaks* (clerks), highly educated administrators whom the prince charged with the running of various parts of the government—diplomatic affairs, land distribution to the service class, military service, and communications (staging posts). A chancery system also began to be developed.

A royal court came into being, and jurisprudence, the courts, the treasury and the armed forces were put in order and centralized. The boyars and "free servants" moved into the ranks of the service nobility and were the bulwark of the central author-

ities. The princes and the noble boyars, who had given their support to Moscow, were given a seat in the boyar *duma*. The population of the country at the time was between nine and ten million, of whom the urban nobility accounted for some 45,000 and the court of the grand prince 2,600. Unlike the Grand Principality of Lithuania and Poland the process of centralization in Russia coincided with the merger of several separate groups into a single dominant class. Henceforth centralization became a powerful political instrument in the development of Russia.

The Russian Church also made a step towards independence. In 1448 the Metropolitan, who used previously to be appointed by Byzantium, began henceforth to be elected by the synod of bishops.

But Russia's renaissance did not make life any easier for the peasants. The state gradually began to incorporate vast lands that were as different in their geographical and natural conditions as they were in their economic and social conditions. For this reason the evolution of feudalism in Russia was a far from simple process, but not generally dissimilar from the same process in Europe. On the contrary, by breaking the trade barrier, Russia was involved in broader economic relations with other countries, which circumstance altered the nature of serfdom and subsequently accelerated the beginning of capitalism. In view of the fact that there was no all-Russian market, that feudalism was dominant and that primary accumulation was retarded, economic consolidation in Russia lagged behind the military and financial requirements of the state both at home and abroad. Therefore the political factor played an important role in the process of centralization. State power made use of that halo of glory that surrounded the dynasty of the Moscow princes who officially personified the rapid and many-fold expansion of Russian territory.

The rulers did much to strengthen the basis of the centralized state which was serfdom. Given the fact that the country had been devastated by the Golden Horde the only possible means to solve its urgent problems during the period of national renaissance was the use of the estate system of land tenure, and of *corvée* and serfdom.

This is why the Moscow princes tried wherever they could to entangle the peasants in a web of state law which tied them to the nobility. In the *Code of*

Laws (Sudebnik) that was issued in 1497 Ivan III brought out a law forbidding peasants from leaving their master's land. Henceforth a peasant could only change masters during the week before or the week after St. George's Day (November 26) and only then if he had paid all his debts. Any protestations on the part of the peasants or attempts to run away or revolt were put down. This law brought them nearer to the condition of serfs. Article 62 of this harsh law related to protecting the boundaries of the lord's property and stated that whoever ploughed the borders should be "whipped and made to pay a rouble fine". According to article 9, "insolence was punishable by death".

The *Code of Laws* was one of the first integrated legal codes in Europe. The early German *Karolina* was not published until 1532 and the French *Ordonnance criminelle*, which was strictly procedural, not until 1533. Those historians who continue to insist on the "oriental despotic system" that existed in Russia should take a look at the Book of Laws issued by the Turkish Sultan, Selim I (1512-1520), which set out to regiment all aspects of social and political life, particularly trade.

Overthrowing the foreign yoke. At a time when Russia was undergoing a national renaissance further appeasement of the Golden Horde was no longer acceptable.

After the defeat at Kulikovo the Horde itself went into inevitable decline. It had now split into four separate khanates—in the Crimea (1433), in Kazan (1446), in Astrakhan (1465) and the Great Horde itself. These khanates fought among themselves, bringing ruin upon their peoples and giving Russia new opportunities to prepare diplomatically and militarily for their overthrow, although moves in this direction were complicated by appearance of Turkey on the East European political scene. Meanwhile in Moscow the Russian diplomats had begun to gain experience and were gradually learning to understand the schemes of the Horde, exploiting its internal disputes, skilfully establishing contacts with the new khanates and neutralizing and to a certain extent winning over the Crimea.

As soon as the Moscow rulers felt they had reached the necessary state of diplomatic and military preparedness, they took a decisive step. In 1476 Ivan III ceased payment of the tribute to the khan of the Great Horde. The Horde tried to fight, but an

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invasion by the forces of Ahmed Khan was repelled by the Russians on the River Ugra between the 8th and 12th October, 1480. The tradespeople in the settlements around Moscow supported the prince, despite the anxieties of the "rich and big-bellied" boyars. Neither the resistance of the seditious Russian nobility, nor the enmity of the German Livonian Order, nor the opposition of Poland and Lithuania could hinder the final outcome of the two-centuries-old struggle.

National independence was restored. Ivan III began to call himself from 1485 onwards the "Grand Prince of All Russia". On Russian coins he was referred to as "Lord of All Russia". The state coat-of-arms now bears the Byzantine double-headed eagle.

The Russian centralized state now became a bulwark for the national liberation and renaissance of all the Slav peoples.

The formation and development of a centralized state meant the restoration of a unified foreign policy on a new basis. Centralized Russia now included the vast lands of Novgorod, Tver (1485), Bryansk and the Severskaya Ukraine (1503). Russia now became an increasingly important factor in European politics, and the foreign powers like Spain (1423), Moldavia (1482), Hungary (1482) and the Teutonic Order (1510) hurried to establish or renew diplomatic relations with her.

The experience gained through its anti-Horde policy was well noted in Moscow and after the liquidation of the Great Horde in 1502 was skilfully applied in relations with Kazan, Bakhchisarai and their mutual patron, the Ottoman Empire, which though highly influential in the Crimea avoided forming any coalitions among the Tatar states which might subsequently prove dangerous, and expressed rather the desire to establish relations with Russia. In 1497 envoys from Moscow appeared in Constantinople.

The strengthening of the Russian state. The Russian state continued to be strengthened under Ivan IV, better known as Ivan the Terrible. His reign (1533-1584) was a time of complexity and contradiction. To this day historians are not agreed in their evaluation of this period in Russian history. One thinks of the bloody executions of the boyars in Moscow and the victorious entry of Russian troops in Kazan (1552), Astrakhan (1556), Polotsk (1563)

and Wenden (1577); of the calling of *Zemsky sobor* (representative assembly) and the laying waste of towns, villages and estates by the dreaded *oprichnina* (special administrative élite and its armed force); of the destruction of Moscow by Devlet Girai, Khan of the Crimea, in 1571 and the victorious Siberian expedition of Yermak in 1582; and of the rout of the Livonian Order and of the defeat of Ivan the Terrible in the Livonian War. They were indeed difficult times. Ivan IV was a cruel and unstable ruler who had no wish to take account of the country's real capabilities, exhausted as it was by the Mongol yoke and still plundered and tormented by hostile powers whose goal it was to undermine Russia's renaissance.

And yet, having cast off the Mongol yoke, Russia moved ahead. Ploughing began to be extensively used in the southern regions, while in the centre of the country, where ploughing had long been practised, the three-field system began to predominate. A large part of the populated lands was owned by the big landowners and about a third by the Church. The number of towns went up to 160, several dozen of which like Samara, Saratov, Kargopol and Temnikov were new.

The population of Moscow was now about 100,000, which made it one of the largest cities in Europe. The lords from all the social estates tried through corvée and through quit-rent paid in either money or in kind to get more produce from the peasants, since the cost of goods had increased and the markets had expanded as internal trade got greater. Towns and even whole regions now began to specialize in specific kinds of production—thus iron was produced in Tula and Ustyuzhna Zhelez-nopolskaya; salt in the White Sea area and skins in Yaroslavl and Serpukhov. The countryside was gradually brought into commercial relations.

Russia's need to acquire cloth, arms, lead, sulphur, copper and other commodities led her to extensive trading with Italy via the Crimea (Kefe) and with other European countries via Lithuania and Livonia. She maintained regular trade with England via the northern ports after Russian envoys visited England and Ivan the Terrible received the English Captain, Richard Chancellor, whose ship had been brought by the wind to the Northern Dvina estuary (1553). A special Moscow Company was formed in England (1554-1555) and given a

number of trading privileges. The portraits of Sir Thomas More and of Elizabeth I by Holbein show them both to be wearing Russian sable furs. Another popular commodity was a kind of mica known as "Muscovy glass". In Germany the trading house of Fugger conducted trade with Russia. French merchants who had traded extensively in Narva when it belonged to Russia, also penetrated the White Sea trade routes and in 1583 the Dieppe merchant Etienne Vazier visited Kola. Despite protests from England, Ivan the Terrible gave permission for "people from the French king to come to Kola" and in 1587 Arkhangelsk (which was then being built) was visited by a ship which belonged to a company of Parisian merchants headed by Jacques Parent who were given considerable trading privileges. Russia exported to France white fox and other furs, salmon, caviare, wax, lard, elk and goat-skins, flax and hemp, and imported cloth, silk, wines (Romanée, from a village of the same name in Burgundy), vinegar, vodka, salt, paper, gold and spices. There were also the beginnings of a cultural exchange between the two countries. Boris Godunov sent Russian young men to France and in 1600 a group of young Frenchmen left Russia, where they had been studying the Russian language, and among them was Jacques Parquent, then 18 years old. Also under Godunov the well-known French condottiere, Captain Jacques Margeret, who commanded a cavalry unit and was the author of the book *Etat présent de l'empire de Russie* (1607) began his military service in Russia.

The price of land went up. And the landed nobility in the provinces looked with open envy upon the estates of the princes, the boyars and the Church. Through the mouth of their main spokesman, Ivan Peresvetov, they called upon Ivan the Terrible to elevate his "soldiers" and bridle his "grandees".

He answered this by a series of reforms, which, under the conditions of serfdom and due to the fact that its tradespeople were kept down by the boyars, had distinctly despotic features.

The future tsar had grown up in an atmosphere of court intrigue and struggle for power between the most powerful boyar families and factions.

He had seen the tsar's lands being squandered and frequently witnessed and even participated in the bloody denouements of these inter-family squabbles, as for example when he himself ordered

Prince Andrei Shuisky to be torn to pieces by dogs.

When eventually at the age of 17 Ivan was crowned tsar (January 16, 1547), hardly any of the boyars who stood around him could have foreseen the methods he would use to strengthen the power of his new title. The tsar saw clearly what the chronicles had been writing and the political commentators had been saying: that the despotism of the boyars had embittered simple people. The peasantry had continually been involved in "unfortunate disturbances" and the local governors always "thirsted too much for blood", but now the people's anger was breaking out everywhere, in Pskov, in Ustyug and even in Moscow itself. The new tsar had not been on his throne a year when armed bands of the people broke through the cordon around the village of Vorobyovo where he was staying and forced their way through to see him. He had to give them his word not to conceal the hated boyars. "This," wrote the tsar, "put fear into my soul and set my bones a-tremble."

Ivan IV had to strengthen the nobility for they provided the social and military basis of his power. This was not an easy task, and he began by using various means. He called representatives of the highest social estates to attend assemblies, the first of which was held in 1549. He formed a military corps enjoying special privileges from the townspeople (nearly 50,000 men), who were known as the *streltsy* (fusiliers) and who were personally loyal to the crown. He introduced a number of ministerial departments controlling military, diplomatic and other affairs which were mostly run by members of the nobility. He set up local administrative boards and gave them the power and authority which had formerly resided in the boyars who had been responsible for local administration. He called for land to be taken away from the "princes of the Church" and made monasterial lands subject to the sovereign's taxes (1551), thereby reducing the autonomy of the Church. He did not, however, take the step of redistributing the land and the peasants in favour of the service nobility. At the time other steps were needed and to these Ivan the Terrible resorted later, when he had acquired sufficient prestige and confidence after a number of major foreign political successes.

The Kazan War. The opening up of Siberia. Annexation of Kazan and Astrakhan was in accor-

Russia

dance with the economic interests of Russia. The nobility had long hankered after the fertile lands of the Volga Area, and the trade route along the Volga provided extensive opportunities for spreading Russian influence into Central Asia, the Caucasus and Siberia.

But the khans of Kazan were supported by the powerful Sultanate of Turkey, which was hostile to Russia. They repeatedly invaded and devastated Russian lands as far as Vologda, Ustyug Veliky and Vyatka taking tens of thousands of Russian prisoners into slavery.

For seven years Ivan IV tried continually to take Kazan, but only the expedition of 1552 which consisted of 150,000 Russian troops resulted in the successful storming of the fortress. In 1556 the same fate befell the Astrakhan khanate.

Russia's rule spread to the lands of the middle reaches of the Volga and the Kama Area, inhabited by the Mordvinian, Udmurt, Chuvash, Mari and Tatar peoples. Subsequently Bashkiria, which had previously been subject to the Nogai murzas and the khans of Siberia, was also incorporated into Russia. The rule of Russia, a country that was incomparably more developed than the khanates, was progressive for these peoples despite the cruel yoke of tsarism with its landlords, administration and the Church. The economy of these regions improved and new towns like Cheboksary and Ufa were built. The opening up of Siberia had begun.

The defeat of the Livonian Order. While concentrating its efforts on the unification of the country and on overthrowing the Mongol-Tatar yoke, the Moscow government simultaneously tried every means at its disposal to restore Russia's former international prestige. It maintained stable diplomatic and trade relations with Northern Europe—Denmark, Sweden and Norway, and strengthened its position in the Gulf of Riga.

Liberation from the Horde, the defeat of the Kazan and Astrakhan khanates and the advance into Siberia seriously altered Russia's position in Europe and aroused considerable interest towards her on the part of Germany, Hungary and a number of other powers. This interest was mainly due to the latter's concern over Turkey, which now held Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, Albania, Moldavia and Wallachia in subjection and the Crimea as a dependent vassal. The intention of the European powers was,

therefore, to use Russia against Turkey. Furthermore, the rich Russian market and its strengthening ties with the countries of the Caucasus and Asia (Iran and India) encouraged the merchants of England, Italy and other countries to increase trade with Moscow, Arkhangelsk, Novgorod and other Russian cities.

But there were still many obstacles to improved relations between Russia and the major European powers. Chief among these was the German Livonian Order, which blocked Russia's path to the Baltic. Ivan the Terrible's government decided to restore their country's former positions in the Baltic area, which had long gravitated economically towards Russia and which offered the Russian nobility and merchants new possessions and commercial revenue. These actions on the part of Russia coincided with analogous measures by England and the Netherlands and were a natural stage in the period of decline in world intermediate trade.

In 1558 Russian troops entered Estonia and the Livonian War began, which was to last 25 years. With the help of the Estonians and Latvians the Russian forces took Narva, Derpt (Tartu), Marienburg (Aluksne), Fellin (Vilyandi). The Livonians were completely defeated and their Meister, Wilhelm Fürstenberg, taken prisoner (1560). The Livonian Order had ceased to exist, but the war continued as the Baltic question developed from being something that purely affected Livonia to something that concerned the whole of Europe and on its solution directly depended the destinies of Byelorussia and the Ukraine. Therefore the Russian government had to make considerable effort to economically attract and politically neutralize the Papacy, France, Spain and several other countries.

The war began to drag on. The opposition of a powerful coalition, devastating invasions from the Crimean Hordes who even got as far as Moscow and treason on the part of the boyar voivodes together with the havoc wrought by the *oprichnina* undermined Russia's economy and resulted in her losing what she had gained. She failed again to get through to the Baltic Sea.

The Oprichnina. The *oprichnina* has left an ugly scar on the memory of the Russian people. *Dyak* (clerk) Ivan Timofeyev, a supporter of the higher boyars, declared that Ivan the Terrible "cleaved his whole

land in twain as if with an axe". The *oprichnina* was formed by the tsar after his first successes in the Livonian War gave way to failures for which he laid the whole blame on the boyars.

When the prominent military commander, Prince Andrei Kurbsky, fled to Lithuania and condemned Ivan IV in an "epistle", the latter accused him in a "stern precept" of being a "traitorous dog". He quoted Kurbsky the example of his loyal servant, who read out his master's letter while dripping blood from a wound in the leg, caused by the tsar stabbing him with his staff and leaning on it while the messenger delivered the message. In his letter of reply Ivan the Terrible set out his own views on the autocratic nature of his power.

On January 5, 1565, Ivan the Terrible announced the formation of a special (*oprichny*) administration in a large and economically developed part of the country, subsequently to be known as the *oprichnina*. The rest of the country where the system remained as before was to be called the *zemshchina*. All landlords living in this special area, if not registered as belonging to the *oprichnina*, lost all their property there and received compensation in other parts.

From the tsar's most trusted servants a special (*oprichny*) corps was formed. All princes, church dignitaries and boyars that he found fault with while the *oprichnina* lasted (a period of eight years that was filled with terror and violence, when spies and informers were everywhere) were done away with, sent into exile or forced to become monks. Ivan the Terrible himself, a man of unbridled passion and paranoid suspicion, participated together with his henchmen, Malyuta Skuratov and Bogdan Belsky, in orgies of blood, rumours of which struck terror among the people. On one occasion in a paroxysm of rage he struck down and mortally wounded his elder son, Ivan. The *oprichniks* destroyed many of the homes and estates of the boyars in their search for sedition, and thousands of perfectly innocent peasants and townspeople died in tortures and executions.

Suspecting the city of Novgorod of treacherous intentions he undertook a military expedition against it, laying waste Tver, Torzhok and other towns on the way. And all this at a time when a war of attrition was being waged for Livonia. In the five weeks that the *oprichniks* went rampant through the city Novgorod was completely plundered and hun-

dreds of the citizens were thrown into the Volkhov to drown.

Of course, there is no denying that the separatist tendencies nurtured by the princes, the boyars and cities like Novgorod were obstacles to the strengthening of Russia, or that when the huge patrimonial and state lands passed into the hands of the *oprichniks* it was the serf-owning landlords that benefited. But at what a price!

Whole areas became desolate and by the end of Ivan the Terrible's reign they were suffering a real economic crisis. In the Moscow district over 80 per cent and around Novgorod and Pskov more than 90 per cent of the land lay fallow.

The *oprichnina* which had been carried out with bloody medieval despotism resulted in decentralization of the country and the army, and had involved the squandering of much of the national heritage, brought Russia to military and political collapse. In 1572 it was abolished.

Economic ruin and bondage from the hands of their new masters was the price the people paid for Ivan the Terrible's *oprichnina*.

It is obvious that there is a typological similarity between the system in Russia during the reign of Ivan the Terrible and that which accompanied the centralization of absolutism in the more advanced European countries. But the same was also true in the politically fragmented world of Germany and Italy, not excluding the court of Christ's Steward.

Ivan the Terrible was a deeply tragic figure. His personal fall came through bringing about a conflict between the ruler and society, which in the final analysis must always prove the stronger. In his own autocratic fashion he did everything he could. Russia moved forward, but this cost the people such suffering that it caused the outbreak of a peasant war which despite the bonds of serfdom wiped away that system in Russia of which Ivan the Terrible was the worst personification.

Under the reign of Boris Godunov (1598-1605), who was elected to the throne by the *Zemsky sobor* (Assembly), the policy of what were called "prohibition years" which had begun under Ivan the Terrible, was continued. These were the years when despite the law of St. George's Day peasants were forbidden to change their masters, and fugitives were returned by state detectives. The position of the bond-serfs became considerably worse.

The country's international ties strengthened and expanded. The consolidation of Russia's prestige as a state under Godunov led to the establishment of the supreme national church organisation: the Church Council of 1589 confirmed the first Russian Patriarch and the new patriarchate faithfully followed the government's policy of enserfment.

The national cultural renaissance in Russia. Over the course of a number of centuries the Great Russian nation was gradually formed with its own rich and varied culture that was nourished by the creative talents of the people. The development of writing and education was reflected in the chronicles, a genre that was well developed at the royal court and at the seat of the metropolitan in Moscow as well as at Tver, Novgorod, Pskov and Ustyug. The genre reached its apogee in the illustrated chronicles of Ivan the Terrible, which contained more than 16,000 colour miniatures. It seems very likely that he himself edited the chronicles, and he was a writer of no mean talents as can be seen from his correspondence with Kurbsky or with Queen Elizabeth I of England, where he reveals a style that was characterized by a clever, biting and at times crudely expressive sarcasm.

As Russia's role in international affairs increased, her chronicles began to include historical events in other countries, particularly her immediate neighbours. But by the mid-16th century the era of the annalist had already been over.

On April 1, 1564, Ivan Fyodorov, a deacon at one of the Kremlin churches, printed the first book in Russian, the *Books of the Apostles*. This marked a new stage in the history of Russian culture. By the end of the 16th century twenty different books had been printed. There is evidence that in subsequent years paper with a Russian watermark was made and that this marked the beginning of a paper-making industry in Russia.

The expansion of the country's territory and the desire to open up and economically exploit the new lands encouraged the development in the 16th century of regional and subsequently national cartography. In 1552 Ivan the Terrible ordered a "drawing of the state" to be made, and thus the first map of the vast lands of Russia between the Northern and the Black Sea was drawn.

The map of the world changed radically after the centralization of Russia and the joining of Siberia.

Russian explorers and coast dwellers, who had by the mid-14th century opened up the estuary of the Northern Dvina, gradually went on to discover all the shores of the three polar seas—the White Sea, the Kara Sea and the East Siberian Sea, and investigate all the river estuaries that flowed into them. As a result, the government strictly controlled all foreign ships in these waters.

Architecture saw the appearance of a totally new style, the hipped roof. An example of this can be seen in the Church of the Ascension (1532) in the village of Kolomenskoye outside Moscow. New fortresses were built to connect the complex of fortifications in North-West Russia with a stone belt of citadels (Nizhni Novgorod—Zaraisk—Tula—Kolomna—the Kirillo-Byelozersky Monastery—the St. Ferapont Monastery) situated in its centre. In the south a grandiose chain of fortifications (*Zasechnaya cherta*) was erected in 1566 with palisades, towers, suspension bridges, etc., to defend the country from invasion by the Crimean Tatars. In later years this line of fortifications was extended and improved and by the 1640s was one thousand kilometres long.

Other towns also grew in size. Novgorod, a "boyar capital", in a vain bid to oppose the power of Moscow built its own Kremlin with a Hall of Facets and watchtowers. In Pskov a new Trinity Cathedral was built.

The Russian traditional style of building in wood, as can still be seen in the famous churches and other buildings at Kizhi on Lake Onega was the source of new and varied architectural styles.

The works of Andrei Rublyov's school and the murals of Dionisy were directly in line with the realistic traditions of ecclesiastical fresco painting, which came primarily from Moscow and Novgorod. Icon painting which made use of actual living people for its models gradually crystallized into group portrait painting, and later into individual portrait painting. The portraits of some of the Russian rulers and noblemen, like Tsar Fyodor Ivanovich and Voivode Mikhail Skopin-Shuisky, are still in existence.

Russia's national revival was accompanied by its cultural renaissance and the appearance of a whole constellation of enlightened champions of progress. Fyodor Karpov, a highly educated courtier in the early 16th century was heavily censorious of the imperfections of a society in which "temporal pow-

er" walked "on lame legs and with blind eyes" along "dangerous paths". But he, too, like others praised the enlightened autocracy of the tsar, seeing it as a means to limit the material and spiritual sway of the Church and to improve the lot of the most hapless section of the community, the peasants.

Writers on religious and political affairs like Vassian Patrikeyev and Maxim Grek severely condemned the cupidity of the Church as the focal point of social evil. "It does not befit the monasteries to own whole villages," wrote one, while the other affirmed that love of paupers was "the most important of the Commandments".

In a proposal to introduce a single form of rent in kind equal to one-fifth of the harvest and to abolish the *kormleniye* (boyars' right to tax for their own benefit the population in the area under their administration), Erasmus, a priest from Pskov who subsequently became archpriest of the palace cathedral in Moscow, spoke of the peasants as that section of society "on whose labour the welfare of the state depends".

The wealthier townsmen also saw the autocracy as their bulwark. Their way of life was reflected in considerable detail in a work entitled the *Domostroi* (The Household Management) by Silvester. From this we learn that the miserly, despotic master of the house would through the "labour of his own two hands" without any inherited riches build a domestic "paradise", in which the tight-fisted servants would amass him new wealth, the parsimonious wife would look after every penny and the children would get their "ribs crushed" lest they should forget to keep him in his old age.

But attitudes also changed. In one of his pronouncements the Metropolitan Daniil railed against fashionable trends and the use of cosmetics, which were as widespread amongst men as they were amongst women. The latter beautified their faces "whitening them, turning up their brows and fastening them with glue; they destroyed their hair and put pads of cloth under their kerchiefs". Nor were the men any better "broadening their chests with thick material and putting wooden strips in their boots".

The real social subversives in Russia were the free-thinking heretics who were the contemporaries of the *oprichnina*. Men like the impecunious nobleman, Matvei Bashkin who brought down on his

head at the instigation of Ivan the Terrible's government all the curses of the Church for freeing his bond-serfs and demanding that others should do the same in the name of "evangelic love". But particularly interesting was the fugitive serf from Moscow, Feodosy Kosoi, who subsequently fled to Lithuania. He proclaimed his "servile teaching" which denied church dogma, exposed its greed, spoke up for the peasants and the poor townsmen and propagated ideas of ethnic equality. "All people are the same in the sight of God," he declared, "whether they are Tatars, Germans or whatever their tongue."

In Europe interest in Russia continued to grow. Dictionaries began to appear translating from Russian into German and other languages. More than 100 publications on Muscovy were compiled in a bibliography in 1600 entitled *Rerum Moscovitarum Auctores Varii*. At the universities of Rostock, Tübingen and Königsberg the first Russian students, called *Ruteni*, appeared. Events in Russian history were widely reported not only in foreign chronology, but in many cases they were reflected in the literature of such countries as England, France, Spain and Italy. English semi-official chronology (as written by William Camden, John Stow, etc.), which was to a large extent based on documents from the royal chancellory and the testimony of merchants in Eastern Europe, devoted considerable space to Russia at this time. It was a theme that inspired some of the greatest European writers, like Shakespeare, Lope de Vega, Montaigne, Campanella and Fleming. Besides certain information on events in Ancient Russia's history gleaned largely through the medium of Polish literature, Montaigne's works contain a vivid description of his meeting and talks with Ivan the Terrible's ambassador to the Papal court, Leonti Shevrigin, which took place in 1581. "The Muscovite ambassador also came here to Rome today," writes Montaigne in his *Journey Through Italy*, "he was dressed in a crimson cloak and a soutane of gold cloth. On his head he wore something resembling a nightcap of gold cloth trimmed with fur under which was a calotte of silver linen." He "insisted that he would not kiss the feet of the Pope, only his right hand, and despite the fact that he was told that the emperor himself had undergone this ceremony, he still refused—even the example of kings was not sufficient for him." He "gave presents ... to the Pope consisting of sable and silver fox pelts,

which are the rarest and most valuable of all furs."

The power of the Church was still strong and severely censured any attempt to free social thought from the fetters of religious ideology, seeing this as fundamentally a step towards state seizure of the Church's wealth and possessions. For this reason the disputes between the innovators and the traditionalists on such specialist questions as what clothes Jesus Christ should be depicted wearing could reach a great pitch of intensity and the words that "Christ wore no trousers" cost dear even to distinguished *dyak* Viskovaty.

The heretics, enlighteners and humanists who were burned at the stake or buried alive in the cells of far-off monasteries were but bright sparks in the dark night of the *oprichnina*.

Enlightened thought and social movements in the towns were harshly put down by the tsarist authorities and the Orthodox Church long before the outbreak of the peasant wars.

The First Peasant War. The First Peasant War, which was led by Ivan Bolotnikov, was the people's answer to their oppressors, the tsar, the princes, the boyars and the nobles. The impetus to revolt came with the terrible famine of 1601-1603, when almost "one-third of the tsardom of Muscovy perished". Waves of unrest swept through the peasantry of the Moscow region and it was only with the greatest of difficulty that the government of Boris Godunov succeeded in defeating the forces of Khlopok, their leader.

The main hotbed of the movement was in the southern part of the country, where since the time of Ivan the Terrible a line of fortifications had been built. Here around the strongholds of the south, along the Yelets—Livny—Kursk—Rylsk—Putivl—Novgorod-Seversky line, peasants and bond-serfs who had been driven by need and hunger sought refuge. Some of them had even been settled there in the capacity of minor men of service.

It needed only a spark for the whole mass of these discontented people to turn their anger against the government in Moscow. This came in the form of Grigori Otrepyev, a petty boyar, who claimed to be Dmitry, son of Ivan the Terrible. All the peasants, Cossacks and minor men of service were promised various concessions and benefits by False Dmitry if they would join him. Political strife

that followed the death of Boris Godunov allowed him to exploit the wave of unrest that gripped the south of the country from the Dnieper through the Don to the Volga. He defeated the boyar voivodes in battle and entered Moscow on June 20, 1605. But his reign was short and badly managed. He gave away land and money to the nobility, to the Cossacks and to the henchmen of his wife, the Polish noblewoman, Marina Mniszech. The result was an uprising in Moscow on May 17, 1606, which put an end to the pretender.

The new tsar was Vassily Shuisky, a boyar, who reigned from 1606 to 1610. He was immediately faced with a new and far more serious peasant uprising against Moscow, which was led by Ivan Bolotnikov, a natural military commander. A former bondserf, he had been taken prisoner by the Crimean Tatars and worked as a slave on the Turkish galleys. His army which formed near Putivl soon numbered many thousands, defeating Shuisky's voivodes at Kromy and at Yelets. Then he took Kolomna and finally laid siege to Moscow. The uprising affected more than 70 towns in Southern and Central Russia and broke out in the Volga Area. In the proclamations he made to the peasants and the bondserfs Bolotnikov called upon them to destroy their masters and seize the land. But the movement was tsarist in character with Bolotnikov claiming to be the "great voivode" of the supposedly still living Tsar Dmitry.

The government, the priesthood and the nobility rapidly gathered their forces, cursing Bolotnikov from every pulpit in the country and promising the people every kind of indulgence. After the battles at Zaborye and Kotly the tsarist troops managed with great difficulty to push the insurgents back to Kaluga away from Moscow. But a three-month siege of Kaluga brought the tsar no success. The insurgents moved their centre of operations to Tula. In May 1607 Tsar Vassily with a 150,000-strong army moved against the city. For four months they heroically held out. Only famine and the flood, which had been caused by making a dam on the River Upa forced the besieged inhabitants on October 10, 1607, to open the city gates. The tsar immediately broke his promise to set free all those who would lay down their arms and executed the leaders. Even so Bolotnikov held firm, believing to the bitter end in his ultimate success. To the crowd of jeering nobles who surrounded him at Yaroslavl, he is supposed to

have said: "I'll soon be putting you all in chains and sowing you up in bearskins!" He was sent to Kargopol, where he was first blinded and then drowned.

Thus ended the First Peasant War in which the peoples of the Ukraine and the Volga Area joined Russian peasants in their fight against their serfowning masters.

The Patriotic War of 1612. Seeing Russia in economic difficulties and beset by class warfare, the united Polish and Lithuanian state, officially known as the *Rzeczypospolita*, together with the rulers of Sweden and the Papacy took steps to encroach upon her independence.

The intervention began in the spring of 1608 when Polish forces aided by False Dmitry II attacked Moscow. Unable, however, to take the capital, they withdrew and encamped at Tushino outside Moscow. There then appeared a threat from the north—under the pretext of bringing aid to Russia the Swedish King Charles IX sent troops into the Novgorod area. But the strong resistance put up by the northern cities helped the government troops commanded by Voivode Mikhail Skopin-Shuisky defeat the forces of False Dmitry II.

Seeing the failure of the Pretender's expedition, the Polish King Sigismund III abandoned him and in the summer of 1609 sent troops against Russia with the aim of giving its throne to his son, Wladislaw. It was then that the city of Smolensk and its Voivode, Mikhail Shein, distinguished themselves in fighting the enemy. Meanwhile as Sigismund's forces approached Moscow, False Dmitry II fled from his camp at Tushino.

But the boyars' protégé, Vassily Shuisky, did not sit long on the throne. In August 1610 the boyars recognized Wladislaw as tsar, and a Polish garrison was stationed in Moscow. Now the position of the country, torn apart as it was by its enemies and held in the grip of peasants' and townspeople's uprisings, boyar revolts, Cossack unrest and church squabbles, was extremely precarious.

It was the common people who saved Russia. Answering Moscow's appeal for help those towns and lands of the Volga Area and the North which had not been touched by the enemy began to muster forces. The civil war and the rise of the national liberation movement encouraged the land assemblies (*zemskiye sobory*) to levy people's militias. The actions of the levies were guided by *zemskiye sobory*

whose nature had changed: they were no longer summoned by the government; they themselves directed its actions, since the tsar's throne was vacant. And later when the assemblies were again convened by the tsar, their role was far more significant. The electoral principle had strengthened and the urban petty traders and craftsmen, or "third social estate", played a greater role in them.

In March 1611 the forces of Prokopi Lyapunov, Voivode of Ryazan, and Prince Dmitry Pozharsky, Voivode of Zaraisk, advanced on Moscow to liberate the capital. At this the interventionists set fire to the city and Moscow was practically destroyed. But strife between the Russian nobles and the Cossacks led to failure and the collapse of the people's levy.

Soon Smolensk fell too. The Swedes took the fortress of Korela, entered Novgorod and threatened Pskov.

But the Russian people did not bow their heads. Kozma Minin, the head of the Nizhni Novgorod local council, levied a new militia and called upon the people to spare neither "themselves, their wives, their children nor their property". One-fifth of all the money collected by the people went towards levying the troops. Through the effort of Minin and Pozharsky the new force was made ready and advanced on Moscow in March 1612. The populations of the towns and villages gave their wholehearted support to the liberation forces. In a number of heavy engagements on August 22, 23 and 24 fought near the Novodevichy Convent on the River Moskva the Polish king's army was beaten and on October 26 Moscow was liberated. This resulted in the complete collapse of the aggressive eastern policy of the Polish and Lithuanian feudal lords and it foreshadowed the subsequent decline of the *Rzeczypospolita*. Undoubtedly, the fact that the Polish gentry's preposterous democracy was fully compromised tended only to consolidate the Russian nobility's belief in absolute monarchy which had assumed an original form of social estate representation.

But the fruits of the people's heroic struggle were reaped by the nobility. In 1613 a *Zemsky sobor* was called attended by representatives from the boyars, the clergy, the urban traders and craftsmen, the Cossacks, the *streltsy*, and possibly even the peasants who worked on state lands. The assembly was called to elect a new tsar and its choice fell on Mikhail Romanov.

Russia

Soon Russia withdrew from the war, having lost in the north the fortified towns of Ivan-Gorod, Yam, Koporye and Oreshek, which were all taken by Sweden in 1617, and Smolensk, Chernigov and Novgorod-Seversky which were taken by the *Rzeczpospolita* in 1618. Russia was once more cut off from the sea. Having blocked Russia's Baltic trade, Sweden tried to foist upon her its own trading conditions in the form of the Neva Company and other unsuccessful projects. The intervention had meant that Russia was unable to reunite with the Ukraine and Byelorussia or restore its positions in the Baltic area, and the ruin which it brought to the country resulted in further enserfment and led to a radical transformation in the distribution pattern of the rural population. This population, under conditions of serfdom, could only slowly revive the progressive trend of forming larger settlements. The same tendencies were also found in Russia's socio-political development.

Liberation had cost the country dear. Moscow and dozens of towns destroyed by the interventionists had to be raised from the ashes, agriculture and trade needed restoration. And this had to be done with backward technology in a society that was run on serfdom, and at a time when the most advanced countries of Europe were entering the path of capitalism.

It must, of course, be realized that the Russian state which stretched over a vast geographical area incorporated provinces which were as unlike in their economic and social relations as they were in their natural geographical conditions. This was one of the conditions for its complex evolution. In those areas, for example, where landownership was predominantly in the form of hereditary estates and those received for military service, corvée was widespread and feudalism assumed the form of serf-ownership. But in the North, in the Dvina area, i. e. in the lands that had once belonged to Novgorod, the conditions for the development of the landed estate system and serfdom were less favourable. This region was notable for state exploitation of the lands which were run by peasants dependent on the state (state feudalism). The absence of serfdom favoured economic activity (particularly in the craft industries) among this peasantry and resulted in its property stratification, the accumulation of capital and the use of hired labour. Given favourable conditions

this trend could lead to the emergence of bourgeois elements in Russian society.

The southern and eastern fringes of the country were the places where in the 16th and 17th centuries peasants fled to escape the bondage of serfdom. Along the Don, the Yaik and the Terek the Cossack freemen settled and there hotbeds of anti-feudal resistance were formed, although the Cossacks themselves grew socially differentiated and at times feudalised with the wealthy upper crust exploiting the poor lower orders.

The absence of a national market, the domination of the feudal system and the delayed development of primary accumulation meant that economic consolidation lagged behind the military and financial needs of the state. Therefore the political factor was extremely important in the process of centralization. The government actively strengthened serfdom as the basis of the centralized state.

What we have here is a mutual connection between the need to fulfil the most urgent tasks facing Russia's national renaissance and the use of the only means available in a country that had been devastated by the Golden Horde—the landed estate system with its corvée and serf-ownership. Obviously, the most important stages of foreign policy are genetically connected with internal political problems and outbreaks of the class struggle. There can be no doubt, for example, that such a connection existed between the Livonian War and Bolotnikov's uprising.

The laws that were passed at the end of the 16th and in the first half of the 17th century formulated on a national scale a single landed estate system based on serfdom that choked the embryonic development of capitalist relations. But they did appear: a national market began to develop, trading capital was invested, which also aided industry, simple cooperatives and manufacturing shops (private as well as state-owned) appeared and a very small labour market was formed. This, of course, did not mean an end to the feudal system. It was still dominant and had sufficient reserves for further development. The formation of the social estates of the nobles and the townsmen was accompanied by a continuous class struggle, which gave rise to the great peasant wars of Bolotnikov and Razin. In these conditions the trend towards autocracy (serf-owning dictatorship) gradually predominated over social estate-

representative monarchy with its land assemblies, its boyars' *duma* (assembly), and its urban and rural self-government.

The Patriotic War had left autocracy weakened and the government of Mikhail Romanov tried to rely on social estate representation, i. e., the land assemblies, which were convened almost annually. They were required to decide matters relating to the popular movements, the restoration of the economy, the imposition of taxes, the armed forces and foreign policy. Sometimes these assemblies functioned under conditions of social unrest, when the tsarist authorities had particular need of support from the nobility and the merchants. And the tsarist authorities also had to take account of their requirements. Subsequently the land assemblies gradually disappeared, having played their part in strengthening the centralized state.

The Russian centralized multinational state developed from social estate-representative monarchy to absolutism. Of the states that existed in Europe at the time only a few were centralized and historical research into these countries reveals both the general laws of history and the peculiarities of each country individually.

At the basis of the system that was forming within these European states we see the interweaving and interaction of the feudal, serf-owning and the capitalist formations, supplemented by vast areas of colonial possessions, most of which were found outside Europe. The forms in which feudal and capitalist elements combined in Europe were many and various. Some countries, like England, France and the Netherlands entered the path of capitalism early; others like Russia only made the first tentative steps in that direction; others still, like Italy, Germany and Spain, barely moved at all; finally there were some peoples who knew nothing of capitalist development. But Europe as a whole moved on from feudalism to capitalism and in that movement Russia played a definitely progressive role.

The Russian centralized state acted as a bulwark for the national liberation and renaissance of the Slav peoples. In this it met resistance from powers that had seized or were trying to seize its lands. But history witnessed the decline of the Golden Horde, of the German Orders, and of the Grand Principality of Lithuania and of the *Rzeczypospolita*, for the majority of the multi-ethnic powers that surround-

ed Russia and for a time extended their sway over the European part of the country had no centralized state.

Russia brought together lands that were close to her from the ethnic, economic and religious points of view. Furthermore, and this is important, most of these lands had no traditions of independent statehood and so there was no need to resort to the aid of various dynastic combinations, unions, federations and autonomies to maintain her sway over them. In pursuing a policy of unification the Moscow government used all its objective and subjective advantages—historical tradition that went back to the multiethnic structure of the Ancient Russian State; religious community; geographical size; economic attraction for the countries of North-Eastern Europe; numerical superiority of the population; Byzantine, South Slav and Italian cultural traditions; and a skilled diplomatic service, that was capable of setting out achievable targets and exploiting the contradictions between political opponents. The centralized state of feudal Russia proved its stability.

On the path to absolutism. The government of Mikhail Romanov (1613-1645) steadily strengthened the power of the nobility over the peasants by gradually extending the period in which runaway serfs could be caught and returned to their masters. Finally under Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich (1645-1676) the *Zemsky sobor* passed a *Code of Laws* in 1649 known as the *Ulozheniye* according to which almost 800,000 private taxed households and 50,000 state peasant households (according to a census taken in 1678) were declared permanently attached to their owners, who were given the additional right of disposing of their peasants' property.

The punishments for fugitive serfs were made more severe and even included the death penalty.

The population of Russia in the 17th century was almost 10 million. The townsmen were also required to pay state taxes and perform services. During the 1670s the number of tradesmen and artisans in *posads* (trading quarters situated outside city walls) was recorded as 45,000, but only a few hundred rich merchants, who formed the nucleus of a growing mercantile bourgeoisie, were given any privileges or had any influence on the organs of power and government. During the 17th century taxes were

doubled and the real value of money fell by 25 per cent.

By the mid-17th century there were 254 towns and cities in the country (excluding Siberia and the Ukraine). The struggle waged by the *posads* against the domination of the secular and clerical feudal lords was accompanied by the expansion and equalization of ownership rights of the *posads* and ended in their recognition (according to the 1649 *Code of Laws*) under the state's strict control. The Moscow *posad* was the largest in the country. Its corporations were under a similar form of dependence of those in Paris, which were under the direct control of the king.

The Russian army numbered more than 120,000 men and its main force was gradually concentrated on its infantry. Russia had neither a navy nor a merchant fleet of importance.

The existence of serfdom throughout Russia meant that the development of the urban social estates and the emergence of bourgeoisie did not result in the formation of an urban system over much of the country. It is true that Moscow had a population of nearly 200,000 and for this reason the Russian ambassador, Grigory Mikulin, who visited London in 1600-1601 thought it was a small city ("The city of London and the Tower are not very big. They stand on high ground with water running round them"), but on the whole Russian towns were small.

In the larger cities manufacturing enterprises appeared which divided labour among their workers and made use of the water engine. In the 15th century a cannon foundry was started in Moscow and subsequently a mint, which employed almost 500 people stamping silver and copper coins, and a textile factory. Outside Moscow glass factories appeared, in Tula and Olonets iron-works and at Kholmogory and Vologda cable factories. At Sol Kamskaya the annual production of 200 salt works was 112,000 tons. But, obviously, manufacturing workshops, and there were over 60 of them in all, did not determine the economic face of the country. The centres of production together with the market towns like Nizhni Novgorod and Irbit were inter-sections in the ever growing nationwide network of trade.

Foreign trade in agricultural produce and furs also developed via Novgorod, Pskov, Tikhvin and

Smolensk with neighbouring European countries, and via Arkhangelsk with England and Holland. It was supposedly in order to defend the interests of Russian trade that the government of Alexei Mikhailovich used the support of the English merchants for the Parliament as an excuse for breaking with England during the time of Cromwell. However, the Russian tsar was tied to his "dear brother" Charles I, the deposed king of England, by bonds of strong affection, and after the accession of Charles II he resumed the sale of furs and grain.

Even though Russia suffered through Swedish domination of the Baltic, Russian merchants not only conducted extensive trade in Stockholm (in accordance with the Treaty of Stolbovo), but also undertook independent journeys to Lübeck, Hamburg, Holland and Italy. The situation was ripe for Russia to wage a decisive struggle for the Baltic. From Sweden Russia imported steel, copper, tin and silver, from Holland she subsequently imported arms. Via Astrakhan Russia traded with Khiva, Bukhara and Iran. Caravans went further east to China, with whom Russia had in 1689 concluded the Treaty of Nerchinsk, which facilitated trade. Common trade duties of five per cent were introduced throughout the country for Russian merchants and a much higher tariff of 19 per cent imposed on foreign merchants. In 1665 the first Russian postal service between Moscow and Vilnius was inaugurated on the basis of the first postal convention.

The working people continued their struggle against the serf-owners. Waves of unrest swept through the towns where it was the ordinary people who suffered most from taxation, since the *posad* rich people tried to put all the burden on to the poor, while the nobles and clerics living in towns were tax-exempt.

The cup of patience finally overflowed when the government tried to introduce a high salt tax and force the payment of arrears. In the summer of 1648 there were uprisings in Sol Vychegodskaya, Ustyug Veliki, Vladimir and other towns.

In Moscow a crowd forced its way into the Kremlin, plundered the houses of the court boyars and got the tsar, who with icon in hand came out to pacify them, to agree to hand over some of the most hated boyars for execution.

Having put down the movement with great diffi-

culty the government called the *Zemsky sobor* at which the *Code of Laws* was passed. This extended the rights of the nobles over their peasants and of the *posad* upper crust over the townspeople and reduced even further the autonomy of the Church (its *slobodas*, or urban settlements, passed into the hands of the state under the 1649 *Code of Laws*). The monasterial estates for a quarter of a century came under the control of the government *monastyrsky prikaz* (department for monasterial affairs) (1650). Thus the autocracy strengthened its rule, but uprisings still continued throughout the country.

An increase in the price of bread in 1650 provoked a riot in Novgorod and Pskov, where the warehouses of the speculators were broken into and the bread given away to the poor.

The issue of copper coins as the equivalent of silver ruined the poor and resulted in an uprising in Moscow on July 25, 1662, when the infuriated mob advanced on Kolomenskoye and demanded that Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich hand over the boyars who had thought up this reform. They smashed their houses and ten thousand *posad* dwellers, soldiers, bond-serfs and peasants surrounded the tsar.

At first the tsar promised to seek out those who were guilty, but having gained time he called in the troops and ordered them to disperse the crowd and hang the ringleaders. But he was forced to stop the issue of copper coins. (In the Kremlin today one can still see the gilded railing made from the copper coins that were called in.) But the surge of popular unrest in those troubled times still continued, finally breaking out in another peasant war.

The Second Peasant War. This was the famous peasant war led by Stepan Razin, a Cossack from the Don. His successful raids on trade caravans along the Volga and the Caspian Sea between 1667 and 1669 brought workers, soldiers and poor people everywhere thronging to his side. His promise to "free everyone from the yoke and slavery of the boyars" and his call to smash the voivodes, the boyars and the nobles received a wide response from the various peoples who inhabited the Volga region, like the Chuvash, the Mordvinians and the Mari.

When in 1670 Razin moved from the Don to the Volga a general insurrection broke out, and his army grew rapidly. With an army of 7,000 he easily took Tsaritsyn. Then with an army of 12,000 he moved on to take the major trading centre of

Astrakhan, whose voivode he ordered to be thrown from a tower. Soon after Saratov and Samara fell and many other towns on both sides of the Volga. Finally with an army of 20,000 he laid siege to Simbirsk on his way to Kazan.

Razin called upon the people to destroy the nobility, but insisting that he was not marching against the tsar, but against the boyars and the nobles. In the areas occupied by his forces, Cossack self-government was introduced and the voivodes, boyars and nobles were killed.

A contemporary eyewitness, a certain L. Fabricius from Holland, wrote that Razin who was then 40 years old tried to "establish good order among the Cossacks", punishing bad language, immorality and theft. Another contemporary eyewitness stated that Razin was a "tall and sedate man, well-built and with a haughty expression on his face" and that he was a "modest and at the same time a strict man".

The terrified tsarist government sent a huge army to the Volga; Moscow was not quiet either. In a battle at Simbirsk the Voivode Miloslavsky defeated the rebels, and Razin, who was wounded, fled with a group of followers to the Don. By spring 1671 the main hotbeds of insurrection had been put out. Over ten thousand rebel prisoners were taken and at a camp near Arzamas, which was commanded by the chief voivode, Prince Yuri Dolgoruky, they were all brutally put to death.

Razin's fate too was sealed. Rich Don Cossacks attacked the village of Kagalnitsky where he was staying and seized him and his family. Razin was brought to Moscow and after being brutally tortured was executed in Red Square on June 6, 1671. In winter of the same year Astrakhan fell. Razin and his followers were beaten, but the image of that great leader and his men lives on in the memory and songs of the Russian people.

Razin's movement found reflection in the social thought of other European countries, but in England King Charles II hastened to congratulate the tsar on his victory.

The reforms of 1654, which were introduced by Patriarch Nikon, centralized the church organization and established a single form of religious worship. The Church grew strong as the bulwark of state power. But the reforms were rejected by a section of the priesthood (Archpriest Avvakum, and

others), the courtiers (Prince Khovansky) and the boyars (Feodosiya Morozova). They claimed that the Russian rites of the "old belief" were closer to original Christianity than the Orthodox Byzantine faith which had been profaned by Turkey and by its connections with Rome.

The government dealt severely with the Old Believers, who were considered as dissenters. But the movement went beyond the confines of a purely religious-political dispute, stirring up the poor peasantry and *posad* dwellers, who saw in defending the old belief a means to struggle against their bondage. The dissenters hid in the forests where they awaited the coming of the Antichrist and when persecuted by the authorities frequently resorted to self-immolation.

Some of the dissenters managed to get hold of the Solovetsky Monastery situated on an island in the White Sea which the poor of the region had taken over, and for eight years they withstood a siege by the tsarist forces. But they were eventually betrayed by a monk who revealed to the troops a secret entrance and the monastery-fortress fell.

Reunification of the Ukraine with Russia. The peasants and the Cossacks waged the struggle for the liberation of the Ukraine from foreign rule. Russia had lost Smolensk, Chernigov and the strongholds on the Gulf of Finland through intervention by Poland and Sweden. The Crimean Tatars had laid waste Russian land as far as the Oka River. Consequently as the country began to get stronger the government's most important task was to restore state unity, to reunite the lands that had been annexed and fight against the Islamic Crimea, now a vassal state of Turkey, the Catholic *Rzeczypospolita* and Protestant Sweden.

Despite the serious consequences of the intervention Russia's position among the European and Asiatic states gradually improved, mainly due to economic revival and growth, better export facilities and trade relations with the Baltic countries. Another factor were the conflicts between Russia's enemies, first in the Swedish-Polish War (1617-1629) and then in the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648).

In the latter Russia remained overtly neutral, but in secret she supported Sweden, sending that country up to 100,000 Reichstalers a year and supplying large consignments of grain at cost price. The

Russo-Swedish rapprochement expressed itself during the Smolensk War (1632-1634), which tied up Polish forces at the culminating point of the Thirty Years' War—the German expeditions of Gustavus Adolphus. The breakdown of the alliance with Sweden after the death of her king coupled with the peasant and Cossack uprisings in the centre of the country prompted Russia to seek peace.

The vast wave of popular movements that swept through an economically weakened Europe in the 1640s and 1650s affecting the outcome of the long war, naturally spread to Russia. According to John Adler Salvius, the Swedish plenipotentiary at the Peace Congress at Westphalia (1648), "It is an amazing fact that everywhere throughout the world we hear of the people rising up against their kings. In France, in England, in Germany, in Poland, in Muscovy, in Turkey it is all the same... Is it due to a conjunction of the stars in the heavens, or is it a world-wide conspiracy of nations against bad rulers—God alone knows." The last in the series of these popular movements, which was against the Polish nobles, developed into a war of liberation.

The peoples of the Ukraine and Byelorussia had long tried to cast off the yoke of the hated Polish gentry. But the peasant and Cossack uprisings which had every so often shaken their power, were all drowned in blood. This mass extermination of the population both by Poland and the Crimean Tatars threatened the whole Ukrainian people with genocide.

But the desire for liberation from Poland and reunification with fraternal Russia was unsuppressible and finally developed into a war.

This war lasted from 1648 to 1654 and resulted in the reunification of the Ukraine east of the Dnieper with Russia. It was led by Bogdan Khmelnytsky (c. 1595-1657), a man who together with his people had traversed the hard path of struggle against the Polish invaders, who had fought in many battles, who had been hunted down by the authorities and who had lost his son at the hands of the Polish murderers. This is why when he led his army of fugitive peasants from the lower reaches of the Dnieper and in January 1648 took the Cossack centre, Zaporozhskaya Sech, he was proclaimed *hetman*, or leader. His fiery appeals brought 70,000 men to his side and by autumn 1648 the uprising had encompassed the whole of the Ukraine and Byelorussia.

For six years the Cossack-peasant regiments under Bogdan Khmelnytsky and his comrades-in-arms Maxim Krivonos and Ivan Bogush fought against the Polish troops, frequently routing them. But the struggle was not easy, the more so for the fact that the khans of the Crimea were treacherously attacking them in the rear. From the very outset Khmelnytsky got help from Russia, asking for the Ukraine to be reunited with her.

Russian Cossacks and peasants fought in his army and the government of the tsar, Alexei Mikhailovich, supported them with food and equipment. It also aided their march into Byelorussia and prepared for war with the *Rzeczypospolita*.

In the lands which had been liberated from the Poles a new Ukrainian military administration was set up, run by the richer Cossacks, of whom Khmelnytsky himself was one. In June 1653 the tsar informed the hetman of his intention to reunify the Ukraine and Russia: "And We Great Sovereign... deigned to take you under the lofty wing of Our Majesty... while our soldiers are assembling on order from Our Majesty and drawing up their ranks to wage battle against the enemy."

On October 1, 1653, at a difficult time for the insurrectionists the *Zemsky sobor* was convened in Moscow to ratify the reunification. On October 23 the Russian government declared war on Poland.

Russian envoys were sent to Pereyaslavl where on January 8, 1654, the Ukrainian *Rada* (general council) which had been called by Hetman Bogdan Khmelnytsky solemnly took the oath of allegiance to Russia.

The reunification of the Ukraine and Russia was a progressive development. It strengthened the alliance and friendship between two fraternal peoples who had fought together against foreign invaders for social and national liberation.

The war with Poland (and subsequently with Sweden) was long and drawn out, but under the Truce of Andruszow (1667) Russia not only got back Smolensk, but also held on to the Ukraine east of the Dnieper including Kiev. Thanks to Russia the Ukrainian people were preserved as a nation, even though they fell under the rule of the Russian tsars.

The peasantry and the urban middle classes of Byelorussia courageously supported this struggle. Despite the fact that the power of the Polish magnates over them was retained, the drive for reunifi-

cation with Russia continued to grow. The Baltic lands taken during the war (like Derpt, etc.) could not, however, be held on to.

The Don and Ukrainian (Zaporozhye) Cossacks played a prominent role in repulsing invasions from the Turks and Tatars. In their fast boats the Cossacks went as far as the Bosphorus, while in 1637 they took Azov from the Turks and held it for several years, an event that was described in the "*Historical*" *Tale of the Capture of Azov* and the "*Poetic*" *Tale of the Siege of Azov*. The reunification of the Ukraine with Russia was recognized by Turkey under the Peace Treaty of Bakhchisarai (1681).

Siberia as part of Russia. We can get an idea of how the enormous expanses of Siberia were opened up with their relatively sparse populations of Nenets, Altaians, Buryats and Yakuts, by looking at the founding of the fortress-towns. Tomsk was founded in 1604, Yeniseisk in 1619, Yakutsk in 1632 and Okhotsk in 1648, when the expedition led by Fedot Popov and Semyon Dezhnev (80 years before Vitus Bering) discovered the strait between Asia and America. Among the most important Russian geographical discoveries in the East was the large (it is three times bigger than Belgium and almost as big as Austria), rich and unique island of Sakhalin, which was discovered by the expedition of Ivan Moskvitin (1639-1641). This headlong rush east, which had held a fascination for the Russians since the time that Yermak travelled the seven thousand kilometres from the Urals to the Pacific Ocean, is explained by the centralization of the country and the economic importance of Siberia's natural wealth, particularly its furs, and by the fact that a sufficiently large number of people were enterprising enough to settle there. Kamchatka was discovered in 1697 by Vladimir Atlasov. With the joining of Siberia the land area of the Russian Empire doubled.

In Moscow a special department was set up to govern Siberia, the whole of which was divided into 19 districts each in the charge of a voivode sent from Moscow. These controlled the collection of the fur tribute (*yasak*)—mainly sable. The state had large fur stocks which were sold abroad for currency, since Russia did not develop precious metal fields of its own.

The Russian men of service in Siberia, ten thousand of them, by the end of the 17th century

Russia

and the peasant settlers, of whom there were about eleven thousand, brought with them the use of the plough in farming.

On many occasions the Russian peasants and poor *posad* dwellers in the new Siberian towns jointly opposed the arbitrary rule of the voivodes and the colonial policies of the tsar.

While opening up Siberia Russia consistently strove for good relations with China. The first Russian envoys visited Peking in 1654 and from this and subsequent visits the Russians got the impression that in China the people were "affectionate and honest and kept nothing hidden in their homes". Despite the Treaty of Nerchinsk (1689) which was disadvantageous to Russia, trade with China via Tobolsk, Nerchinsk and Kyakhta developed. Her chief imports were silks and cottons, velvet, satin, spices, porcelain and pearls. By 1750 twelve trade caravans had gone to China. By the time of Peter the Great there was a whole group of Sinologists in Russia, who were considerably aided by the presence of a Russian cultural mission in Peking and a teacher of Manchurian and Chinese by the name of Chou Ge in St. Petersburg.

Having put down the popular movements, the nobility gradually moved over to the idea of an absolute monarchy. The boyars' *duma*, which for a long time had been the tsar's consultative body, now became defunct. At the same time the government had put an end to attempts on the part of Patriarch Nikon to raise the power of the Church above that of the state, and in 1666 Nikon was deposed and sent into exile.

Under pressure of the nobility the practice of *mestnichestvo*, a system of giving order of preference based on birth and service, was ended. All documents relating to it were burned. Henceforth the nobility of a family name was not to be the decisive factor in making appointments for government service. It was a reform that struck at the old, blue-blooded aristocracy.

Now that the position of the tsar was much stronger, he no longer had any need for the social estate land assemblies (*zemskiye sobory*), and the last such assembly which was called in 1683 to discuss a permanent peace with Poland was dissolved before it finished. The *Zemsky sobor* and similar representative institutions like the Parliament in England, the States-General in France, and the Netherlands, the

Reichstag and Landtag in Germany, the Riksdag in Scandinavia and the Sejm in Poland and Bohemia all appeared at different times, but always under conditions of acute social conflict.

In Rus the prototypes of the *Zemsky sobor* were first mentioned in the 12th and 13th centuries. In subsequent centuries and at the dawn of Muscovite centralization other representative institutions also functioned. There were the princes' *dumas*, the inter-principality congresses (in which boyars, the clergy, voivodes and the ruling clique of the free city where the congress was held participated), arbitration tribunals of boyars and princes and, finally, the *veche* (popular assembly). These social-estate institutions with the exception of the *duma* gradually developed into *sobors*. The devastation caused by the Golden Horde held up the development of some of the social estates and their representative institutions until 1549, when the clergy, the boyars and the nobility were represented at the *sobors* but not the townsmen.

Representation in Russia was characterized by a great variety of social estate groups, some of which like the clergy and the nobility were relatively stable, while others like the traders (usually rich townsmen) took part in some of the *sobors*, while others still, like the peasants (with rare exceptions) were not allowed to attend at all. The affairs discussed by the various assemblies in the countries of Europe were similar (voting taxes, handing in and discussing petitions, ratifying laws, etc.), but the scope of their real rights varied. Also varied were the procedures for and periods of their convening. The main characteristic of the Russian *Zemsky sobor* was the weak representation of the third social estate and the serf-owning system of autocracy. Hence the paradoxical phenomenon that the special military dictatorship (*oprichnina*) under Ivan the Terrible was authorized by a social estate assembly. He himself saw the latter as one of the possible forms for a feudal monarchy. But, as we have seen, not much time was to pass before the absolute monarchy felt that it could dispense with social estate representative system.

During the 17th century the conditions were prepared for the transformations that were to take place under Peter the Great, the need for which was admitted by the most far-sighted of the noble politicians like Afanasy Ordin-Nashchokin, who was de-

scribed by Samuel Collins, an English doctor, as "possibly second to none among the ministers of Europe".

In the armed forces the importance of the gentry's cavalry and the *streltsy's* infantry (fusiliers), particularly after the latter's uprisings in Moscow, fell, for they displayed their social instability as a bulwark of autocracy. As part of the trade and craft population of the capital as well as of the military the *streltsy* felt the double burden of the hardening autocratic system. And the vagueness of their demands and actions was due to the social diversity of their ranks. Whereas at first the Moscow insurgent *streltsy* unjustifiably demanded that the government of the regent Sophia Alexeyevna (1682-1689) should grant them the same rights as the royal guard, a few years later in 1698 they went over to her side in an attempted palace coup against Peter the Great.

Her loss of power and subsequent confinement in the Novodevichy Convent was the beginning of the disbandment of the *streltsy*. Now the importance of the permanent army increased. This was formed from among the peasantry and the *posad* dwellers who were taken on for life service. By the end of the 17th century Russia could put 200,000 men in the field, 50,000 of which were Cossacks. Gradually a regular army was formed.

As a result of all these changes, the tsar became an autocrat, ruling "according to his will". The nobility increasingly became the support of the centralized monarchy that was developing towards absolutism. It ran the various departments, of which there were 40 covering every aspect of domestic and foreign affairs.

Culture. With the development of book-printing the number of literate persons among the nobility and the *posad* dwellers grew considerably. During the second half of the 17th century the Moscow Printing House published more than 300,000 ABC books and some 150,000 Psalters and prayer-books. State schools appeared in Moscow, which trained the nobles for service in the ministries or the Church, and there were also some special schools like Simeon Polotsky's Grammar School and the Slavonic, Greek and Latin Academy, which was run by the Lichudes Brothers, who were doctors from Padua University. Private book collections also began to appear.

Scientific and theoretical thought in Russia was hampered by the generally low level of education and culture. Nevertheless, the Russian geographical discoveries in Siberia and the Far East, reflected in some significant works of Nikifor Venyukov and Nikolai Spafari-Milescu, were of great importance for the development of world science. The *Book of Great Maps* (1627) by A.J. Mezentsev and the related drawings were an important development in Russian cartography and had an influence on the government's Black Sea policy. All the best works of European cartography in the 16th and 17th centuries (Martin Bielski, Gerhardus Mercator, Willem Blaeu and Abraham Ortelius) were known in translation.

The 17th century in Russia saw a transition from medieval forms of literature to those of the new era. Because of the difficult conditions the country faced due to foreign invasions the embryonic humanism that had existed in pre-Tatar times (as found in the secular chronicles and in the chivalrous stories, etc.) was unable to develop fully even in the pre-Renaissance 14th and 15th centuries. For this reason absolutism was accompanied in the early stages by a kind of "Renaissance Baroque" which contained the lively bright tones that were characteristic of Ancient Rus.

The new literature was completely distinctive not only for its abundance of genres—syllabic verse like that of Simeon Polotsky, theatrical plays, translations of adventure novels, recording of folklore, parodies on state bureaucracy, satires—but more significant for the increasing importance it gave to the individual, both writer and hero. Furthermore, the heroes became more like real people—the son of a merchant, Savva Grudtsyn, trying to get away from his business, the rogue, Frol Skobeyev, the "noble" seeker after adventure, Yeruslan Lazarevitch... Literary talent improved too. Direct speech began to be used. Even in such a traditional genre as the Lives of the Saints descriptions of everyday life and nature made their appearance. Various individuals wrote their memoirs. Human feelings were treated, especially love and the admiration for female beauty (*The Tale of the Page Monastery of Tver*).

One of the principal achievements was the Archpriest Avvakum's *Life* written by himself. A zealous champion of the old belief, he fearlessly re-

jected the innovations like crossing oneself with three fingers, saying "hallelujah" three times, movement around the lectern counter-clockwise and all the other reforms introduced by that "apostate, heretic and wolfhound" Patriarch Nikon. For many decades Avvakum upheld his old piety, both when in exile in Siberia and in his earthen prison (a deep open pit in the ground) in Pustozersk. His *Life* is full of great spiritual strength and rightly recognized as a masterpiece of literature.

Stories like "Shemyaka's Trial" and "Yersh Yershovich" showed in a fiercely denunciatory and at times highly satirical form the views of the townsfolk on the harsh lot of the poor in a society ruled by the nobles, the clergy and the rich *posad* people.

The new style of wooden architecture is represented by the palatial ensemble at Kolomenskoye, the house of Prince Golitsyn and of Troyekurov, a boyar, in Moscow, and the finely carved churches in Karelia.

The gradual "secularisation" of architecture and the development of the magnificent style known as "Moscow Baroque" can be seen in the stone Church of the Intercession (1693) in the village of Fili near Moscow, and a later form of the same style in the Church of Ivan the Warrior in Moscow. Icon painting, as can be seen from the works of Simon Ushakov, showed increasing realism and the desire to express man's psychological nature.

Two types of literature developed, one for the nobles and one for the ordinary people, and the differences between the culture of the lords and that of the oppressed people became increasingly marked. These phenomena were particularly evident in Siberia, where the influence of serfdom on cultural life was weaker. Of course, culture had not yet been fully secularized. The most advanced works of European social and political thought had not been translated into Russian. But the flood of culture from Russia to Moldavia, Wallachia, Bulgaria and Serbia carried on as before. Literary genres similar to those in the rest of Europe were gradually developed, greater educational opportunities became available for the newly forming noble and *posad* intelligentsia and the foundations were laid for the rapid cultural renaissance which came about through the reforms of Peter the Great. Therefore in Russia the Baroque age was akin to the Renaissance in the more advanced countries of Europe. Thanks to the works of such observant witnesses as Olearius (1647), Meyerberg (1688), and Johann Korb (1698-1799), information about Russia reached other countries of Europe. It is interesting to note that even Grimmelshausen makes his hero, Simplissimus, visit Muscovy. And naturally enough, it was in Germany, where interest in Russia went back to Sigmund Herberstein, that Russian studies were developed.

Chapter IV

Feudalism in Western Asia

Iran at the dawn of the Middle Ages. Though the decline of the ancient world in the West had no direct analogy in Western Asia, it nevertheless had a pronounced effect on the lands that lay east of the Roman Empire. The Parthian Empire, which under the Arsacid dynasty had constituted Rome's bitterest and most persistent enemy, was by the 3rd century A. D. on the point of collapse.

The continuous wars that it fought during the 2nd and early part of the 3rd century, which in the main had been unsuccessful, had brought ruin upon the state and increasingly demonstrated the weakness of the "king of kings", while at the same time encouraging local rulers to break away and achieve independence.

As Iran entered the 3rd century, there existed in the south of the country a region known as Pars. This was an ethnic Persian area, which in days gone by had produced the great Persian Achaemenid dynasty. Now in the second decade of the 3rd century A. D. its ruler, Ardashir, son of Papak, a former high priest at the temple of Anaitis, the ancient Persian goddess of fertility, openly rose up against the Parthian dynasty, vanquished the last Parthian king, took the capital, Ctesiphon on the Tigris and proclaimed himself the Shahinshah of Iran.

Thus was founded the Sassanid state of Iran, which lasted until the mid-7th century when it was destroyed by the Arabs.

The Sassanids at first appear to have had little effect on the social and political foundations of Iran. The ancient system of social estates was left com-

pletely unchanged, despite the outward alterations of its form. Thus the social estate of landowners was divided into separate groups (landowners proper, artisans and tradesmen), while scribes and clerks sprang out from estate of priests. The famous seven clans of Iran (the Surenas, the Carenas, the Mihranis and others) were also preserved and for a long time they retained their power in the country. Aturpatakan lost its autonomy and henceforth became just a region ruled by a Persian governor. But the kings of Armenia (also Arsacides) offered resistance and with Rome's aid retained their power. The Sassanian shahs could never accept this and for many years the problem of Armenia and other Transcaucasian countries became almost the pivot of Iran's relations with Rome.

The chief support for the new state came from the Zoroastrian priesthood. The Sassanian shahs gave continual patronage to the temples of fire, the best known of which were at Pars and Aturpatakan. It was there in the ancient town of Gandzak to the south-east of Lake Urmia that one of the five largest Zoroastrian sanctuaries, the temple of the king and of the military and administrative nobility, was located. The head of the Zoroastrian cult was known as the *magupat*, or chief of the Magi, as the Zoroastrian priests were called. The temples possessed enormous wealth and constituted a powerful social and political force. It was under the Sassanids that the official written codex of the *Avesta*, the holy book of Zoroastrianism was compiled. The Zoroastrian priests supported the shahs to the very end of the Sassanid dynasty, and if any conflicts arose between

them and the throne, these were always the result of the complex social struggle in Iran that found its ideological expression in various kinds of heresies, which will be discussed below.

The seven clans of Iran were no less firmly attached to the new dynasty. Historians do not agree on whether it is possible to identify these with the descendants of the seven comrades-in-arms of Darius I Hystaspes, who supported him in his struggle against the rebel, Gaumata, or whether simply it was a matter of the figure seven (which was considered sacred in pre-Islamic Iran) being codified. But whatever the facts, these early noble clans lost neither their power nor their wealth in Iran until some time in the 5th century when their influence came to be restricted due to social processes and the class struggle.

Manichaeism. It is difficult to say how strong the contradictions were between the state and the old clan nobility during the first period of the Sassanids when social tensions found their outlet in Manichaeism. The teaching of Manes presented ideologically a complex synthesis of old Iranian and Mesopotamian pagan beliefs, the ideas of various Christian sects and the philosophies of a number of the Hellenistic schools. Furthermore, at the time that Manes lived and preached (the third quarter of the 3rd century) the orthodox adherent of fundamental Zoroastrianism, the High Priest Kartir, had considerable influence on the Iranian social scene. In the conflict between the two faiths Kartir's followers proved victorious and the defeated Manes was condemned to a terrible death in 267 and an anathema pronounced on his followers.

The social roots of Manichaeism have not so far been studied in any depth, but it is obvious that it included among its followers a certain section of the social hierarchy, for otherwise it is difficult to understand why Shah Shapur I (241-272) gave for a short time his support to the new teaching. It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that the Iranian society of the time was already seeing the beginnings of that important process that came eventually to light almost two centuries later.

The formation of the communal nobility. Socially speaking, there was a division among the clan hierarchy who were known as the *dehkans*. The word *deh* originally meant country, but at that period it referred to a village commune. The *dehkans*

were the upper section of the communal nobility which had been formed during the reign of the Sassanids. During the 5th century they appear to have been just an up and coming social force. The 5th century, incidentally, was an exceptionally important period in Iranian history. It was then that a number of phenomena made their appearance for the first time. Economically speaking, these found expression primarily in the dissolution of clan property and the appearance, albeit in a rather vague form, of private ownership of the land by individual members of the old noble clans and the parallel emergence of a new nobility (*dehkans*). These processes were even more apparent in certain aspects of political life and in the general social tension which was most clearly expressed in the well-known Mazdakite movement. But already in the first half of the 5th century, on the eve of this mass social upheaval, which certain historians have been inclined to consider as a kind of social revolution, certain phenomena were apparent that are worth further consideration.

Foreign policy. Like all the other countries at the time Sassanian Iran pursued a highly active foreign policy. Its main enemies were the Roman Empire in the west and various other states like the Kushan Empire and the Ephtalites in the east. Their relations with these countries were inherited directly from their predecessors, the Parthians. The wars with Rome which we know of mainly through the Greek and Roman historians were fought very frequently, their main objectives being Transcaucasia and the Aramaic provinces of Asia Minor. After the famous victories of Shapur I, particularly the Battle of Edessa in 260 A.D. in which the Roman Emperor, Valerianus, was taken prisoner, the Parthians were forced to pay for their earlier success. Strange as it may seem, the victorious Shapur was overcome by the small army of Odenatus, the prince of Palmyra (Syria). In 298 Shah Nersch suffered another terrible defeat at the hands of the Romans, losing his enormous army. Even the Shah's harem fell to them. The result of this battle was the Treaty of Nisibis (298) according to which Rome was given a number of border provinces and Armenia was forced to follow in the wake of Roman policy. The wars of the 4th century, particularly during the reign of Shapur II (309-379), which were described by Ammianus Marcellinus as well as a number of

Armenian historians, resulted in the division of Transcaucasia in 378, in which one half was taken by Iran, the other by Rome.

In Iran at the time a somewhat unclear process of internal fermentation was taking place. The government entered into conflict with the old nobility and the Zoroastrian priesthood, particularly during the reign of Shah Yazdegerd I (399-420), who was eventually killed in a palace coup. It is noteworthy that this Shah tried to get the support of the Iranian Christians and with this aim in view maintained good relations with Byzantium. His descendents, Shah Bahram V the Gor (421-438) and Yazdegerd II (438-457) not only returned to the traditional policies of the predecessors of the deposed shah, but even strengthened them. Mass persecutions of the Christians followed with Christian churches being destroyed and the Christians themselves subjected to torture and death. Particularly indicative was the policy pursued in vassal Transcaucasia where Christianity had already become the state religion in the 4th century, first in Armenia, then in Georgia and finally in Caucasian Albania. A huge army equipped with the latest weaponry like elephant units, siege-engines and tunneling specialists was dispatched to Transcaucasia under the command of Mihr-Ners, the *Vuzurg-framatar*, or first minister, who was an extremely able man for his times and who according to the most authentic evidence was descended from one of the seven noble houses, the Spondiads.

The campaign of Mihr-Ners in Transcaucasia (450-451) is better known to us than any other contemporary event in Iranian history, thanks to the Armenian chroniclers. Mihr-Ners brought an edict from the shah to the Transcaucasian nobility, who were directed against the pro-Byzantine, Christian party which primarily operated in Armenia. But this turned out to be a far from simple matter. Christianity had been dominant in Armenia for almost a century and a half, and the threats of the Iranian government against the Armenian princes and the Church together with encroachment on the property rights of the latter led to a general uprising in Armenia, in which the majority of the Armenian nobles took part. In 451 a bloody battle was fought in which the commander of the Armenian forces, Vardan Mamikonyan, fell. But the Iranian army was in tatters and incapable of giving further fight.

The internal conflict. The shah realized that repressions alone would not get him far, so he adopted a policy which was new, but highly popular at the time, the use of "the stick and the carrot". What he needed was a scapegoat and this was found in the person of Mihr-Nersch, who had stood at the helm of state for a quarter of a century. He was accused of foreign policy failure, dismissed from his post and put under guard. Previously the Spondiad clan had held great influence in Iran with the three sons of Mihr-Nersch holding the important state posts of chief of the priesthood, head of the country's economic ministry and commander of the army. Now this noble clan was made the subject of harsh repressions. The second shah to bear the name of Yazdegerd did not follow the precipitate policy of the first in attacking all the noble clans, but he did punish the Spondiads. Mihr-Nersch was imprisoned in one of the Zoroastrian temples where he spent several years as a junior priest. This incident shows that the old clan nobility was increasingly losing its positions and relinquishing part of its material and political power to the new nobility, the *dehkans*.

The Mazdakite Movement. The Mazdakite movement, which took place during the reign of Shah Kavadh I (491-529), was one of the greatest social upheavals to shake Iran. It was preceded by a series of events that included the wars abroad of which we know much more. Shah Peroz (459-484), a descendant of Shah Yazdegerd II became involved in a number of complex political conflicts. In the early 480s a large uprising took place in Transcaucasia involving the King of Georgia, Vakhtang Gorgasal, and most of the princes from Armenia and Albania. After several years of unsuccessful struggle against them, Shah Peroz' heir managed to resolve the conflict by allowing the Transcaucasian nobility to retain its rights and Iran's governors to be appointed from among the local princes. But even worse consequences resulted from Peroz' war against the nomadic Ephtalites in the east of the empire. The shah himself was ambushed and slaughtered together with his troops. As often happens in history, these foreign political failures were the cause of acute social aggravation in the country.

Unfortunately, the material we have today on the history of Mazdak and the Mazdakites is for the most part late in origin and of a highly tendentious nature, coming as it does from sources inimical to

the movement. Very little is known about Mazdak himself. He was not of noble birth, and possibly belonged to the *dehkans*. The ideas contained in Mazdakism were a fairly haphazard amalgam of various ancient religions, including Iranian cults, Christianity, Manichaeism and various ancient philosophies. But the social essence of this teaching consisted in the preaching of all-round property equality. This idea came from the Iranian communards, who by this time had already lost their freedom in respect of property and rights, but longed to see it restored.

Equally haphazard was the social composition of Mazdak's followers. For the most part they were made up of the common poor, but according to the sources they also contained noblemen and even members of the clan nobility. The motives of the latter are not clear, but possibly they were few in number and very likely they were only temporary followers. Nevertheless, the Mazdakite movement gave the appearance of being a mass movement, which one way or another included practically all strata of Iranian society.

It is hardly surprising that given the general social and political crisis facing the country at the time the attitude of the state in the person of Shah Kavadh towards the Mazdakite movement was somewhat ambiguous. At first the shah decided to use Mazdak against his opponents and favoured him to the point of making him the royal adviser. But the clan nobility and the Zoroastrian priesthood were strongly against this. In 496 a conspiracy was formed against the shah and he was arrested and imprisoned. His place on the throne was taken by his brother, Jamasp. But Kavadh managed to escape from prison and fled to the nomadic Ephtalites, whose ruler was his relative. With their help in 498 he got back the throne. But this was certainly not due to the military support of the Ephtalites alone. Kavadh had never been a radical Mazdakite, nor could he ever be. His return to the throne was in large measure due to the support of the *dehkans*, together with the fact that the shah became reconciled with a large part of the clan nobility and the Zoroastrian priesthood. Taking advantage of these circumstances, Kavadh established himself on the throne for a second time. He executed some members of the clan nobility that had arisen against him previously, but in general pursued a policy of consol-

idating the social hierarchy against Mazdak and his followers.

But it was thirty years after the return of Kavadh before the Mazdakites were openly punished. This was carried out with the blessing of his father by Kavadh's son and heir, Chosroes, who was later called Anushirvan by the court historians, meaning "immortal". He enticed Mazdak to Ctesiphon, the capital, and had him arrested and brutally executed (529). Then began the mass annihilation of the Mazdakites throughout Iran. The 11th-century politician and writer, Nizam-al-Mulk, preserved a contemporary description of how this was done. Apparently, there existed in 5th-century Iran a kind of social duty, called the *khashar*, which actually meant a form of levy. These *khashars* included various kinds of public works like building roads or supplying the troops, etc., and they involved the broad masses of the people in the villages and the towns. Thus Chosroes ordered such a *khashar* to bury alive the arrested Mazdakites.

The reorganization of the state under Chosroes I. Having defeated the Mazdakite movement, Chosroes ensured himself the support of the Iranian ruling class, which helped him two years later ascend the throne without hindrance. The new shah distinguished himself not only by his determination and perspicacity. He was also a good politician and commander, who was soon to reopen the wars in the west and the east. These wars, the western part of which we know more about, were fought with changeable success. Sometimes the Iranian troops were victorious and the famous banner of Kave, which was made of leopard skins and decorated with precious stones, would fly above the coastal fortresses of ancient Colchis where traditionally the Byzantine Empire held sway. But sometimes the Greeks would be triumphant and make deep incursions into Iranian territory.

Though he was almost continually waging wars, Chosroes I devoted considerable attention to the problems of the internal reorganization of the empire. He carried out a number of reforms that were designed to strengthen the power of the shah and weaken that of the old clan nobility. The whole country was divided into four large parts: the north, the south, the east and the west which were known as *kustaks*, or imperial provinces. The governors of these provinces wielded enormous power, but they

themselves were completely dependent on the will of the shah. Chosroes continued the policy of his predecessors which was designed to do away with all vestiges of autonomy among the outlying regions, which shortly before had been independent states. Thus the northern, or Caucasian *kustak*, whose centre was at Aturpatakan, included the Iranian part of Armenia, Eastern Georgia, Caucasian Albania and a number of principalities in the mountainous regions of the Caucasus.

The governor of each of the four provinces was also the commander-in-chief of the armed forces there.

Chosroes introduced important tax reforms. They were intended to regulate the system of tax collection and concentrate all revenue in the centre. Two types of taxes were firmly established: the land tax (*kharaj*) and the poll-tax (*gezit*). The first could be paid in money or in kind, with the amount levied determined according to land area and the type of crop under cultivation. The second was obligatory for the entire taxable social estate depending on the property status of each of its members. It is not hard to see that the main purpose of these reforms was to strengthen the economic, political and military power of the central government. We have little evidence as to how they turned out in practice, but in theory Chosroes' reforms served as an example for all medieval oriental politicians who wanted centralization (as, for example, the well-known Nizam-al-Mulk, vizier under the Seljukid Malik-shah in the 11th century). Their implementation, at least in principle, became possible due to the Mazdakite movement, which undermined the power and influence of the old clan nobility. Evidently the reforms of Chosroes were supported by the *dehkans* and at least not rejected by the Zoroastrian priesthood.

These reforms temporarily strengthened the Sassanid empire, and primarily concerned the sphere of foreign policy. Chosroes I conducted lengthy wars, which brought him no less glory than his famous reforms. But in the end his activity did not produce the expected results. The consolidation of the central power that was brought about by the above-mentioned means could not be long lasting. That was due to the economic and social processes which were then occurring in the depths of Iranian society. Without stopping over their complex specifics we can characterize them in general as the develop-

ment of feudalization expressed in the subsequent evolution of private ownership and social stratification. The *dehkans*, who in the 5th century were at the summit of Iranian society, had already in the 6th century merged with the remainder of the clan nobility to gradually form a social class of feudal lords. But this class was not recognized under pre-Islamic law and such examples of the latter as the famous *Matagdan-i hazar datastan* (Book of a Thousand Solutions), were on the whole based on the old, pre-Chosroes laws in which the *dehkans* were not even mentioned. In fact, as we know from 7th-10th century sources it was the *dehkans* who were on the eve of the Arab invasion the dominant class in Iranian society. In the 6th century, being close to the central state power which granted them the right to control villages and even whole regions, the *dehkans* soon became the almost unlimited owners of such possessions and in practice tried to rule them quite independently. It was they together with the remaining members of the clan nobility who inspired such uprisings as the Bahram Cobin revolt in the late 6th century. They too, convinced of the failure of the wars with Byzantium that had been started by Shah Chosroes II in 604, betrayed the shah and killed him. And when the victorious Arabian cavalry swept across Iran defeating the Iranian forces in numerous battles, the local *dehkans* frequently betrayed their country by surrendering their strongholds to the enemy.

The decline of the Sassanian state. The later years of the Sassanian state were marked by internal discord. The nobility put shahs on the throne and then overthrew them. Even women were crowned. Thus the daughter of Chosroes II, one of the ten shahs to rule Iran from 628 to 632, at first incited a famous general called Hoream, with the promise of her hand and the throne. But when he had defeated his other rivals and was close to achieving his aim, the queen took sides with Horoh-Ormizd, the ruler of Aturpatakan, promising to become his wife. Hoream was killed, but the perfidious queen treated the new pretender in the same way. Inviting him at night to the palace with only one bodyguard, she had this new prospective husband and shah stabbed to death by her servants.

The Arabs quickly crushed the famous Iranian troops. In the first battle at Kadisiyya in 637 the Iranians suffered a terrible defeat and lost their

leader, Rustam, the son of Horoh-Ormizd and the ruler of Aturpatakan. The sources relate that when the victorious Arabian cavalry galloped towards Ctesiphon, the inhabitants abandoned their homes and belongings and ran from the city screaming "*devan amadand!*" (the evil spirits are coming). A few years later the last of the Sassanian shahs, Yazdegerd III, after fruitless wanderings in the eastern provinces, was murdered at Merv (now in Soviet Turkmenia) in 651 by a miller, who was tempted by his clothes and rich jewelry.

The culture of Sassanian Iran. After the fall of the Sassanian state Iran long remained deprived of political independence. The Arabian conquest brought with it a new state religion—Islam, a religion that was totally intolerant of the old pagan polytheistic cults. The Islamic zealots (particularly in the early stages) destroyed many of the cultural monuments they found in the lands they conquered. It is a well-known fact, for instance, that the fanatic General Kuteiba destroyed all Khorezmian literature in the early 8th century. But in Iran this did not happen. Zoroastrianism remained right up until the 10th century, particularly in such provinces as Fars and Kerman. In the mountain strongholds of the *dehkans* the old rituals were secretly observed. Old manuscripts were preserved and sacred fires maintained. It took Islam some three or four centuries to become firmly established in Iran, when the remainder of the Zoroastrians were forced to emigrate to India, where they have existed till this day. However quite a lot has remained of pre-Islamic Iranian culture. Within a hundred years after the fall of the Sassanids the descendants of the Zoroastrians, now Muslims together with the more educated among the Arabs began to collect everything that remained of pre-Islamic literature. At the court of the caliphs in the 8th and 9th centuries and later under the semi-independent dynasties in East and subsequently in West Iran the ancient chronicles of the Sassanids, called the *Khvatay-namak* (Books of the Rulers), were translated into Arabic. One of the

translators, Ibn-al-Mukaffa (obit. 757), a Persian who had taken the Islamic religion, was a great scholar and enlightener. He translated into Arabic a number of literary works from Pahlavi (Middle Persian) such as the treatise entitled *Calila and Dimna*, which came originally from India. But Ibn-al-Mukaffa fell victim to the calumny of his enemies and was executed while still a young man for heresy. But his work was continued by many scholars from the 9th to the 11th centuries, among whom was the famous Iranian historian, al-Tabari (obit 923), who included in his multi-volume work in Arabic on world history both the ancient legends of Iran and the official chronicles of the Sassanids. Later, in the late 10th and early 11th centuries, the great Iranian poet Firdausi turned these legends into poetry in his famous poem, *Shah-name*. Thus, albeit in reworked fashion, the ancient Iranian legends of the warrior Rustam, the blacksmith Kavah and other national heroes have come down to us.

Unfortunately, however, the original literature in Middle Persian has almost completely disappeared with the exception of a few religious works, theses and excerpts from various works that were in the main preserved by the Parsees in India.

In modern times archaeologists and orientalists have begun the study of the monuments that have remained of Sassanian Iran. Together with the well-known, but not always correctly interpreted bas-reliefs of the early Sassanids like the famous monument to Shapur I trampling down the Roman Emperor, Valerianus, many other monuments of the Sassanian period have been discovered. So also have works of sculpture, the remains of Zoroastrian shrines and priceless inscriptions in the long-dead Middle Persian language. These in the main relate to the 3rd and 4th centuries and immortalize the deeds of the Sassanian shahs and their priests. They also provide a unique picture of the period that allows us direct insight into the artistic talents of the forebears of the modern Persians and other peoples who inhabit Iran.

The Arabs in the 7th century. The origins of Islam. The Arabs who dealt the mortal blow to the Sassanian state had long inhabited the Arabian Peninsula, from where in ancient times they began to migrate north. By the 7th century not only was the whole population of the Syrian Desert ethnically Arab, but also that of a number of adjacent oases in Syria and Iraq. Most of the Arabs at this time were nomadic, but on the Arabian Peninsula there were oases at which the populations had become settled, farming the land and building up towns that produced the rich merchants who traded with other countries of the Orient. It was in one of these towns, Mecca, a religious centre for the neighbouring Bedouins, that in the early part of the 7th century Mohammed, a member of the tribe of Quraysh and a descendant of an impoverished noble family that had once ruled the region, lived. He was the founder of a new world religion, that has been given the name Islam, which literally translated means "submission to God". Its followers throughout the world are known as Muslims.

The active work of the Prophet Mohammed lasted in the main from the 620s till the early 630s. Stories which have come down to us related how driven out by his kinsmen the future "emissary of God" married a rich widow, Khadija, and then through his preaching won over the sceptical Meccan and Yathrib sheikhs and fought against his enemies. It is important to note that the new religion, which in its form and its rituals comprised a strange mixture of Judaism, Christianity, and local pagan beliefs, was highly relevant for its times. Internal social changes and foreign political developments prepared the soil for the unification of the motley mass of Bedouins, and Islam with its teaching of a single Muslim community and the need to fight the infidels, and with the one God, Allah, and His Prophet, Mohammed, became its banner. The Prophet died in 632 but his successors, the caliphs, began a holy war (*Djihad*) against all non-believers.

The Arab Caliphate under the Omayyads. In less than a quarter of a century the new state (the caliphate) overran and conquered an enormous territory largely at the expense of the Sassanian Empire and the Byzantine possessions in Asia and

North Africa. By the beginning of the 8th century there were Muslim advanced posts on the shores of the Atlantic, by the Amu Darya river, at the gates of India, in Derbent in the Caucasus, and not far from the capital of Byzantium.

At first Islam was a religion which preached equality among all members of the Muslim community before the one God. Even the first, the so-called "righteous" caliphs were only the spiritual and military shepherds of the Muslims, nothing more. But the third "righteous" caliph, Osman (644-656), who came from a family of rich Meccan merchants, the Omayyads began to show evidence of an excessive love of wealth and the desire to enrich his closest relatives. For this venality he paid with his life. Henceforth there began a conflict between those who zealously guarded the basic fundamentals of Islam and the Arab nobility and merchants who gradually became the leaders of the Islamic movement. It was in this discord that the fourth "righteous" caliph, Ali, who was brother-in-law and cousin of the Prophet, was killed in 661. In subsequent years many of Mohammed's comrades-in-arms as well as his grandson Husein also perished. The Islamic state now fell into the hands of the Omayyads, who relied on the power of the Arab nobility. The Syrian city of Damascus was made their capital and Arabia itself gradually became nothing more than a revered religious backwater.

The early Arab caliphate was a complex conglomerate state. The overwhelming majority of the Arabs were at the time at a stage of early class relations which were clearly reflected in the legal norms set out in the Holy Koran. But they had conquered countries where in some cases class society had a thousand-year history and where feudal relations either already existed or were in the process of formation. It is therefore not surprising that the early caliphate showed the apparently strange phenomenon of Bedouin social norms existing side by side with social systems that had been formed in Byzantium and Iran. The Arab army was organized on the tribal principle and even the newly converted Muslims from among the Aramaeans, Iranians and other peoples were looked upon as unequal members (*mawwaliya*) of a tribe. At the same time the

Omayyad caliphs and their entourage had completely inherited the forms of state organization that had been current in Sassanian Iran and the Byzantine eastern possessions. Thus the tax system employed was one very similar to that of Chosroes I with even the basic types of taxes being modeled on those of the Iranians (the *haraj-kharaj* and the *jizya-gezit*). Right up to the end of the 7th century the caliphate minted none of its own coins, using rather those that had been in circulation in Iran and Byzantium. Right up to the reform of Caliph Abd al-Malik (697-698) the Arabic language was not used for affairs of state, Greek, Aramaic and Middle Persian (Pahlavi) being preferred. The caliphs also inherited the system of local administration and much else that was necessary for the running of a state.

But the caliphate was a state and the social interests of this state soon began to run counter to the dogmas of Islam. For example, Islam was at first offered to all subjugated peoples. Those who accepted it, and once received into the Islamic community, enjoyed equally its, albeit limited, rights. They paid neither *haraj* nor *jizya*, but only the *ushr*, or tithe. But it soon became clear that this privilege attracted into the ranks of the faithful an enormous mass of people who had for the most part comprised the oppressed and poor strata in the conquered countries. Since these newly converted paid no taxes, this system was extremely disadvantageous to the state.

To this situation the Omayyad caliphs reacted differently. One of them, Omar II (717-720), decided to act directly according to the behests of Mohammed and offered broad access to the Islamic religion. But this had an immediate and negative effect on state revenue, and gave rise to an outcry from the nobility. After Omar's death his descendants took appropriate measures to protect their interests.

In general the basic policy of the Omayyad caliphs consisted in maintaining the interests of the Arab tribal nobility and limiting the rights of the feudal lords in the subjugated countries. At the same time all social movements among the people were mercilessly put down under the guise of ending this or that heresy. And such heresies in the new religion even in the 7th century were many. The most powerful of these and one of the earliest deviations

in the Islamic faith was Shiism, whose followers opposed the Arab tribal nobility headed by the Omayyads and recognized only the descendants of Mohammed through his only daughter Fatima and her husband Ali as the rightful spiritual leaders of the faithful.

In the 680s the Shiites suffered a serious defeat. Their leader, Husein, the grandson of the Prophet, was killed, while his other grandson, Hasan, retired to private life in Medina giving up politics.

More dangerous for the Omayyads was the more radical heretical teaching of the Kharijites (meaning "dissenters" in Arabic), who were thus called because they had broken away from Ali who in their opinion had made too many concessions to the Omayyads. The Kharijites were dealt with brutally, their movement being mercilessly eradicated by the Omayyad general, al-Hadjdjad in the late 7th century. All in all the Omayyads waged a bitter struggle against their enemies, killing not only the descendants of Mohammed, but also wreaking havoc upon Mecca, the holy city. In 692 the forces of Caliph Abd al-Malik took the city by storm, causing damage to the Kaaba, a small stone building that contains the sacred Black Stone, a relic of the Islamic world.

The caliphate was inhabited by an enormous number of different peoples and tribes. While some of them like the Aramaicans of Syria and Iraq and the Copts of Egypt had during the 7th and 8th centuries become Arabized and converted to the Islamic faith, others like the Iranians, though mostly Muslim, did not become Arabized. The Iranian feudal lords, for example, looked upon themselves as second-class citizens in the Omayyad caliphate, while the *dehkans* of Iran, many of whom had retained their possessions, looked back to the times of the Sassanids, no doubt deeply regretting the role their ancestors had played in betraying that dynasty.

By the first half of the 8th century, when the caliphate had achieved its greatest successes abroad (the conquest of Spain, expeditions to southern France and to the north of the Caucasus, and the subjugation of Central Asia and part of India), the state was gradually beginning to wear away within through various kinds of social contradictions.

These appeared in their strongest form in the east of the empire, in those regions with a predominantly

Iranian population. But even the Iranian feudal lords no longer came out under the decayed banners of Zoroastrianism, preferring rather the standards of the various heretical (from the point of view of the Omayyads) Islamic sects. The most powerful popular movement in eastern Iran and in Mavere-Un-Nahr which began in the 740s and led to the downfall of the Omayyads adhered, at least in the programme of its leaders, to the principles of orthodox Islam—Sunnism, and adopted only minor elements from the Shiites and other heretical sects. This movement in which broad masses of the people took part was headed by the local *dehkans*. Against the bankrupt Omayyads it supported the descendants of the Prophet's uncle, Abbas, not the direct descendants of Mohammed. The powerful movement brought victory for the Abbassides. The last Omayyad caliph, Merwan II, was killed and many of his relatives cut down. The few who managed to save themselves did so by fleeing to the Iberian Peninsula, where they formed the Caliphate of Cordova as an independent state.

The Abbasside Caliphate. Thus the Omayyads were replaced by a new dynasty, the Abbassides, whose representatives maintained the title that had already then become illusory of Ruler of the Faithful for many centuries until the fall of Baghdad to the Mongol khan, Hulagu, in 1258, when the last caliph, al-Mustasim, having revealed his hidden treasures to the Mongols, was executed by them (according to some stories he was trampled by elephants, according to others he was killed by Hulagu personally).

The distinctive feature of the Abbasside Caliphate was the broader social base on which the caliphs relied for support. Now they looked not only to the Arab nobility, but also to the Iranian feudal lords who had helped them come to power. As a result of this, the centre of government was moved to Mesopotamia in 762, to a spot not far from the old ruined residence of the Arshakids and the Sassanids at Ctesiphon. Here the new capital of the caliphate, Baghdad, was built on the site of a small village. The Iranian nobility began to get back the rights they had possessed in the times of the later Sassanids. They increasingly ousted native Arabs from positions at court and by the late 8th century the post of *vizier* had become firmly established as the property of the Iranian Barmakids. Later, it is true, they were

subjected to repressions, but the Barmakids were only replaced by other noble *dehkan* families both in Baghdad and, particularly, in the provinces.

For a time the broader social base of the caliphate averted the centrifugal forces that had begun under the Omayyads, but only for a time. Empires like the caliphate that had been created primarily through force of arms possessed an excessively complex internal structure. In the case of the caliphate this amounted to a synthesis of the local social relations that had formed earlier in Iran, Transcaucasia, Central Asia, Mesopotamia, Syria and other countries with social relations that were similar to those of the Arabs. But economically speaking, the countries that had been conquered by the Arabs were more advanced than Arabia itself. In particular, feudal relations which were beginning to make themselves apparent in such countries continued to develop.

The system by which all land in Islamic society was owned by the caliph, a system that was rooted in the social structure of Arab society, was in fact in the majority of countries that formed the caliphate a fiction. In Iran, for instance, most of the *dehkan* families who were subject to the Islamic state retained their landed possessions. The domains of the Sassanids (which were particularly numerous in Iraq) together with the lands of those feudal lords who had offered resistance to the caliphate were confiscated by the Islamic state. But *en masse* the local nobility were left untouched with their relationship to the central powers only temporarily changing, while the lower social structure, so to speak, remained in principle the same. With the coming to power of the Abbassides the local feudal lords, particularly the *dehkans* in the Iranian provinces, got back their economic and political influence. Furthermore, from the very beginning the caliphs had granted state lands to their relatives, their retainers and their military leaders so that the number of private landowners also grew in this way.

In the majority of countries of Western and Central Asia where agricultural development was closely linked with the need for artificial irrigation so that rights over the land meant rights over water, the direct producer, the peasant, had from time immemorial been considered a tenant-sharecropper, who was obliged to pay the state or an individual landowner a certain fixed amount of his

produce depending on the number of his cattle or farm tools, etc. This system had been established in Iran through the reforms of Chosroes I and adopted throughout most of the territory of the Abbaside Caliphate. The types of private ownership and exploitation that were predominant there were a specific form of feudal relations that existed alongside other types of social relations and forms of exploitation.

These included in the first place slavery, the importance of which in the caliphate from the 7th to the 9th centuries not only did not diminish in comparison with former times, but in certain provinces actually grew. This was due primarily to the social structure of the Arabs themselves and the specifics of the early Islamic state. According to Islamic law as set out in the Koran, a population is divided into the free and the non-free (the latter including all women). Obviously this was a reflection of family law as practised by the Bedouins extended to include the whole of society. With the emergence of the caliphate under the influence of the complex and dissimilar relations that existed in the subjugated countries, the category of the "non-free" was considerably enlarged to include not only slaves but freedmen and clients (*mawwaliya*), etc. Slaves were also brought into the empire from different neighbouring countries and particularly from those regions where there were no class societies or where class societies were only just developing (among the Turks, in Africa and in the Slav lands). Large numbers of the slaves came on to the market in the Islamic towns from the "infidel" countries like Byzantium where wars were being fought between the ghazi and Christians.

In certain parts of the caliphate during the 8th and 9th centuries enormous latifundia were built and run on slave-labour. Thus in lower Mesopotamia, for example, African slaves (*Zihji*) were extensively exploited on such farms. It was there that in the 360s-380s a vast uprising of slaves took place forming its own army and state and threatening Baghdad itself.

The Caliphate of the Abbassides proved a less stable state than that of the Omayyads. The events following the death of Harun al-Rashid (809), famous thanks to *Thousand and One Nights*, revealed the whole infirmity and instability of the power of the descendants of the Prophet's uncle. The two

sons of the dead caliph, Amin and Mamun, began a long internecine struggle for power, in which Mamun ultimately proved victorious with the backing of the Iranian *dehkans*. The caliphs of the 9th century were more reminiscent of the Merovingians, the Frankish "lazy kings" in the 8th century, than of Allah's avenging stewards on earth. Intriguing between the various factions among the city and particularly the rural nobility, the caliphs began to rely more and more on their palace guard that was in the main formed from Turkic slaves. Ultimately they soon became pitiful playthings in the hands of the palace guard commanders. Real power in the state was contended for by the latter, the eunuchs who supervised the royal harem, by retainers who served the caliph's wives and by other non-official persons. The fate of Caliph al-Muhtadi (869-870) may serve as an example. Both his predecessors had been crowned and overthrown by the commanders of the royal guard, but Caliph al-Muhtadi struggled against them, relying instead on the Islamic priesthood. To win the latter over he gave up drinking, a habit that was reproved by the Koran, but which was indulged in by almost every ruler of the faithful at the time. But this attempt at piety did nothing to save him, for he was killed by the drunken guardsmen.

The social and liberation movement. The history of Baghdad in the 9th and 10th centuries is full of internal discord. But it was not the main threat to the empire's unity. This came from the outlying provinces where centrifugal forces made themselves increasingly evident. By the 9th century the Iranian *dehkans*, the Armenian princes and the local Arab nobility in Syria, North Africa and other parts were already playing a much greater role. The social and liberation movement in various provinces differed in character. In some the social fount was felt more strongly, in others the local feudal lords played the dominant role from the beginning. But in almost all cases these movements were exploited by the enemies of the caliphate, particularly Byzantium.

Perhaps the most powerful movement to show anti-feudal tendencies was the uprising led by Babek in north-western Iran. It began in 816 and continued for over 20 years. Babek himself was evidently an Iranian (his father moved from Mesopotamia to Azerbaijan) and his main support came from the peasantry in north-western Iran, who had

been deprived of their freedoms by the local feudal lords and the Abbassid provincial governors. The ideological banner of the Khurramis (as Babek's supporters were called) was a modified form of Mazdakism and for this reason his opponents accused him of advocating the community of wives and other sins condemned by the Koran. For twenty years Babek and his followers beat off the caliph's troops, destroying army after army. But eventually the revolt was put down. The reason for this was the growing degeneration of the Khurramite state, whose leaders gradually came to resemble feudal lords as well as the treachery of certain feudal fellow-travellers of the movement. Babek himself sought refuge with one of the Caucasian Christian princes, but was betrayed and taken prisoner. In 837 he was executed by quartering at the caliph's residence in Samarra, near Baghdad.

During the 9th century the caliphate was faced with increasingly frequent outbreaks of the liberation movement in the provinces. It was at that time that the Bagratid dynasty in Armenia and Georgia came into prominence. The Bagratids came from a local princely clan, whereas the Hamdanids, who established themselves later in Syria, were simply Bedouin leaders. Several of the local dynasties had completely plebeian origins, like the Saffarids, whose forefather ruled in eastern Iran around 867 and had been an ordinary copper-worker. The Samanid dynasty which replaced the Saffarids came from the *dehkan* Balkha clan.

Some of the caliph's governors in the provinces had even once been slaves, or rather those same palace guards who were the real rulers in Baghdad. But the attempts of these local rulers to become independent were not immediately or always successful. An example of this was the governor of Azerbaijan, Yusuf ibn Abu-l-Saj, in the first quarter of the 10th century. A native of Central Asia, he made his career by suppressing the attempts of the Armenian king, Smbat I, to gain his independence from the caliph with the help of Byzantium. Yusuf defeated Smbat and had him put to death (his headless body was hung on a cross in the Armenian capital of Dvina). But later Yusuf himself revealed an insubordination that, as it happened, proved to be premature. He was defeated by the caliph's forces in 919 and became the main figure in a shameful spectacle, being carried through the streets of Baghdad on an

ass to the jeers of the crowd. After several years imprisonment Yusuf was pardoned and given a state appointment. He died in service to the caliph a few years later during a revolt of the Keramats.

The whole of the 9th century and a good part of the 10th were filled with events of this kind. By the mid-10th century the real power of the Ruler of the Faithful was confined to the regions around the capital. In 945 Ahmad, the ruler of western Iran who came from the Buyide dynasty, entered Baghdad under arms and established guardianship over the caliph. One hundred and ten years later the Seljuk sultan, Togrul Beg, did exactly the same thing.

Economic upsurge. The growth of cities. The 7th and 8th centuries saw the development of the economic, social and political foundations of the caliphate. There subsequently ensued a time that was characterized by economic upsurge, the growth of towns and cities and increased external and partially internal trade. The towns and cities of the caliphate had either existed before its foundation (within the Sassanian state and parts of Byzantium, etc.), or they were new urban developments formed from the *djunds*, or military camps, or they were centres of trade and crafts. By the 9th century there were several dozen towns throughout the caliphate, and later this number increased even more. The urban population in the main towns of the caliphate amounted to several tens of thousands, and in the largest cities this figure was in excess of one hundred thousand. There were no cities of this size in Europe at the time, where the old Roman towns had either disappeared completely or been left in ruins after the barbarian invasions from the 5th to the 8th centuries.

The 9th and 10th century Islamic towns tended on the whole to be of the same type. They consisted, as a rule, of three main parts: the citadel, the town itself and the trading quarter, called in Arabic the *rabat*. It is interesting to note that during the 9th and 10th centuries this term was used beyond the confines of the Islamic world and even penetrated as far as Rus. The craft shops and markets of such Islamic cities as Baghdad, Damascus, Alexandria, Rey, Ardebil and Bukhara were rich and famous throughout the medieval world. Trade routes met here literally from all parts of the globe. To Baghdad, the Abbasside capital, roads led from the south

(the ports of the Persian Gulf), from the west (the Mediterranean), from the north (Eastern Europe and Scandinavia via the Black Sea and the Caucasus) and from the east (China and the steppes of Turkestan via Iran and Central Asia). Different crafts were practised and trade and banking flourished. The latter was so developed in the countries of the politically fragmented Islamic world during the 11th century that a cheque written by a banker in Khorasan could be cashed in the Maghreb. The growth of the towns led to an increase in their political activity. In the 10th and 11th centuries more or less stable elements of town self-government arose, when the urban hierarchy took power into its own hands with the aid of levies formed from various political adventurers that bore a great resemblance to the European condottieres of the 13th and 14th centuries.

But most important—by the 8th and 9th centuries the Islamic towns had already become cultural centres where science and poetry were developed and institutes of learning and schools of artists were springing up. Also at that time arose what would appear to be a blatant contradiction between the dogma of the Islamic religion with all its conservatism and the development of science and culture, a contradiction which was brought about by life itself despite all the commands of the Koran and the hadiths. Take for example the fact that the Koran forbade the depiction of the human form, or for that matter of any living being. During the period of the unity of the caliphate, Islamic miniatures were beginning to appear which for all the persecution that was practised during the period of triumphant obscurantism have lasted for centuries.

Science and culture in the Islamic East. Science in the Islamic East began in the 8th century as a synthesis of the scientific achievements of the ancient world, Iranian civilization and the cultures of a number of the peoples of Western Asia, particularly the Aramaeans and the Egyptians. It had also experienced the influence of such far-off countries as India. But it was Graeco-Roman science that was the main keystone of what has become known as Arab medieval science, which in fact was the joint achievement of many peoples living under the caliphate where the Arabic language had been the one thing that unified them. The main role in the early stages of the formation of this science was

played by the scholars of Syria, the Aramaeans, who translated into Arabic the works of the ancient writers like Plato, Euclid, Aristotle, Ptolemy and many others. Together with the Iranians who had accepted the Islamic religion they also translated into Arabic numerous works that had been written in Mesopotamia and Iran in the Aramaic and Pahlavi languages together with scientific treatises that genetically related to Indian prototypes. In this way the first stage of the formation of Arab science was accomplished during the 8th and early 9th centuries.

There then followed the second stage, which was the emergence on the above basis—as far as was possible at the time—of oriental science as a result of the requirements imposed by everyday life, and the almost simultaneous gemmation of various separate scientific branches: medicine, astronomy, geography, mathematics, etc. Ninth-century scholars like al-Ferghani and al-Khwarizmi had not only made a synthesis of Graeco-Roman and oriental science, particularly in the disciplines of mathematics and astronomy, but had also developed completely new directions for these sciences. In the 10th century comprehensive encyclopaedic works began to appear like those of the famous al-Masudi (obit. 956) which summarized the whole of scientific development of the time.

The scholars under the caliphate were men of various nationalities. As well as native Arabs and Arabized Aramaeans, there were many Persians and representatives of the non-Persian peoples of Iran like the Khorezmians. But they all wrote in Arabic. The scholars worked alone or formed scientific societies often with the participation and under the patronage of the wealthy and powerful. Such Maecenases were the viziers Djaykhani and Balami in the Samanid state in the 10th century, who were themselves famed as geographers and historians. One of the 9th-century Abbasside caliphs, al-Vasik, even formed a scientific circle at his court which had a lively interest in geography. He organized an expedition to the north under a certain Sallam-the-Translator with the purpose of discovering the famous walls of Yadjudj wa-Madjudj which are mentioned in the Koran and which the legendary Iskander the Two-Horned built to prevent the wild peoples of the North from invading the civilized countries.

But the real flourishing of Islamic culture came in the 11th and 12th and partly in the 13th centuries, i. e. the time when the caliphate was already in decline. Standing at the very threshold of this period is the magnificent figure of al-Biruni, a native of Khorezm, whose millennium was not so long ago celebrated throughout the world. Biruni was a polymath who set out and extended his knowledge in numerous works that were for the most part devoted to individual branches of the natural sciences and the humanitarian sciences. It is with Biruni that we can clearly see the division of science into different branches, according obviously to the level of development reached at the period, although in a number of disciplines he extended the bounds of this knowledge considerably further. The inquisitive mind of the great scholar knew no barriers. When, for instance, he wanted to understand Indian science, Biruni learned Sanskrit and his description of India retained its relevance for centuries to come.

Another great Central Asian scholar who made his mark on Arab science was Abu Ali ibn-Sina, or Avicenna as he is better known in Europe. He was the founder of classical medieval medicine, which subsequently saw a whole constellation of Arabic-speaking doctors and scholars in various countries like Spain, Egypt, Syria and Iran.

The Islamic world produced numerous science textbooks ranging from narrowly specialized works to general encyclopaedias. On the eve of the Mongol invasion the geographer, Yakut ar-Rumi, wrote an enormous encyclopaedic geographical work summarizing the development of the geographical science from the 8th to the 12th century. From the late 9th century onwards a number of basic historical works were compiled by al-Tabari, as-Saalibi,

ibn al-Athir and others. As well as treating the history of the Islamic world these also covered the history of other peoples including the Greeks and the Romans. Later still ibn-Khaldun, a North African historian, tried to develop a new method for studying mankind's past in which he saw economic evolution as the basis of social development.

It is a curious fact that in the Islamic world, where the Koran and its supplements (the hadiths and the Sunna, etc.) apparently held sway, a number of different philosophical systems which were based on those of the ancients, some of them even more rational, were allowed to develop.

If we turn to literature, we see a number of interesting features. Under the caliphate Arabic poetry was predominant, although its creators were frequently non-Arabs. The roots of this poetry lay not only in the oral epics of the Bedouins, but also in old Iranian mythology and lyrical poetry. The works of such early poets as abu-Nuwas were characterized by their close links with real life in all its manifestations. At the same time, however paradoxical it may seem, early Islam with its canonized Arabic language was never an obstacle to the development of literature in the languages of the other Islamic peoples. In the 8th and 9th centuries poetry was already being written in Parsee (modern Persian) and embryonic literature was appearing in the other Iranian languages like Mazandaran.

One other point of no small importance while on the subject of early medieval Islamic culture. It exercised considerable influence on the cultures of the neighbouring Christian peoples as, for example, on the Armenians and Georgians in the Caucasus and on Christian culture in Spain, Italy and France.

The Feudal Empire on Three Continents

The Seljuk Empire. The history of the extreme western peninsula of the Asiatic continent, which in ancient times was called simply Asia, was during the Middle Ages highly complex and changeable. After the break-up of the Roman Empire it was the main part of Byzantium, but by the 8th century only its western half belonged to the latter. The short-lived eastward expansion of Byzantium during the 10th

century had little effect and in 1071 the Emperor Romanus Diogenes suffered a terrible defeat at Mantsikert in Armenia at the hands of a new enemy, the Seljuks, who had moved across from the far-off deserts and steppes of Central Asia. From that time on Byzantine rule extended only as far as the extreme western tip of the peninsula.

The Seljuk Turks, who took prisoner the Emper-

or Romanus Diogenes, now controlled a vast empire which stretched from the rivers of Central Asia in the east to Syria and the remains of Byzantium in the west. But the empire of the Seljuks like many other empires in the Middle Ages did not last long. By the late 11th century all that was left was the Seljuk state in Asia Minor, or the Sultanate of the Lands of Rum, as it was called. The history of this state was a history of almost continual warfare—with Byzantium, with the Crusaders, with the Mongols and with other enemies. But at the same time it was this state that as a result of the amalgamation of various Turkic tribes with the local multi-ethnic population of central Asia Minor formed the basis of the Turkish nation. But this was a process that went beyond the fall of the Sultanate of Rum, lasting into the 14th and 15th centuries.

After the Mongol invasion the Sultanate of Rum fell leaving a number of feudal principalities on its ruins. The most powerful among these at first was the Karaman Principality in the south of central Asia Minor and the Ottoman possession in the far west of the peninsula. By the mid-14th century the supremacy of the latter was evident. This was in part due to its geographical location in a region that neighboured the decrepit Byzantium, where conditions were most favourable for foreign expansion, an expansion which took place at the same time as the expansion of ethnic Turkish territory.

The Ottoman Empire. It is significant that the 14th century which saw the rise of the Ottoman Empire also saw its expansion westwards. By the end of the century all that was left of the Byzantine Empire was its capital, Constantinople, and a small area of land around it, and that too was soon to become part of the Ottoman Empire. It is interesting to note that it was at this time that Constantinople was given the name Istanbul, or Stambul (a distortion of the Greek words "to the city" which was the reply the Greeks gave when setting out to the beleaguered capital of the Christian East).

The main area of interest for Turkish foreign policy was the Balkans with its preponderance of mutually hostile states that were also continually suffering from internal feudal discord. The Balkan states, Bulgaria, Serbia, Wallachia and others, unable to rely on their own strength against the Turkish threat and having no trust in each other, sought

help from outside—from Egypt in the east to Papal Rome in the west.

The culmination of the struggle for the Balkans was the Battle of Kosovo in 1389, where although Sultan Murad I was killed by a Serbian patriot, the Ottomans were victorious. A few years later in 1396 the Christian countries of Europe undertook a Crusade against the Turks, but in the Battle of Nikopol Sultan Bayezid I, called the Lightning, inflicted a crushing defeat upon them that stopped the Crusaders from interfering in eastern affairs for half a century.

What were the reasons for the Ottoman Turks' success? Apart from the weakness of their western enemies, which has been mentioned previously, there were a number of other important factors. First, the role of Islam as a militant ideology under the banner of which the Muslim masses could be raised against the infidels, who "against the will of God" possessed vast rich countries. But behind this ideological banner which was later sanctified by the bringing of such relics as the sword and cloak of the Prophet Mohammed to Istanbul there lay other, more material reasons for the power of the Ottomans. During the early period of the Ottoman Empire this power was to a large degree due to the fief system, under which the sultans presented the best lands in the subjugated territories to their soldiers, who thereby became landowners with privileged rights over the Christian feudal lords. Not that the latter were excessively badly treated, let alone destroyed. On the contrary, the policy of the sultans in the Balkans during the 14th and 15th centuries was very flexible. They skilfully won over a section of the local feudal lords, even those that remained Christians.

Then again there was the state of the Ottoman army during the early period. The soldiers were free members of peasant communes, being either nomadic, semi-nomadic or settled, and they were either Turkish or Turkish-speaking coming from that section of the local population that had been converted to Islam. They also had the benefits of victory in battle, being given war booty, prisoners, etc. Their enemies on the other hand, as has already been noted, were not in so fortunate a position. In effect, there took place a clash between two social systems. On the one hand was the Turkish Ottoman state in which feudal relations were only just begin-

ning to develop on the basis of a synthesis of local feudal forms with the early class relations of the Turkic tribes; on the other were Byzantium and the Balkan states in which developed feudal relations were showing a natural tendency to feudal fragmentation.

Those who held fiefs under the Ottoman Empire in the 14th and 15th centuries (Timariots and Zaims) were not independent enough during this period to present a challenge to the central powers. This took place later. The whole social organization of the new state was directed towards war. Even the Janissaries were originally formed in 1360 as infantry units in addition to cavalry, as was demanded by the military requirements of the time.

In this way the Ottoman Empire developed into the early 15th century, when it would seem that the destruction of Byzantium was imminent. The final fall, however, was somewhat delayed by what at the time appeared a quite unexpected circumstance. During the last quarter of the 14th century there had arisen on the ruins of the *ulus* of the Mongolian Jagataids in Central Asia a state that was built by a man known in the east as Timur and in the west as Tamerlane. After numerous outright victories that were accompanied by terrible brutalities particularly in Asia Minor and large territorial conquests, Tamerlane advanced against Sultan Bayezid I. Both sides amassed vast hordes. In the battle which took place in July 1402 near what is the capital of modern Turkey, Ankara, Tamerlane was victorious. But the victory cost him dear, although his hordes were numerically superior. The final outcome, it appears, was due to betrayal by the nomads of Asia Minor known as the Black Tatars whom Tamerlane won over by appealing to their blood kinship with his own soldiers. Bayezid himself was taken prisoner and according to some stories ended his days in an iron cage.

The Ottoman Empire had been dealt a harsh blow. But Tamerlane having thoroughly plundered Asia Minor soon turned his attention to the east. It took the Ottomans almost 15 years to heal the wounds of their defeat at Ankara. But the rejoicing in Constantinople—now under siege for several decades—that attended the defeat of Bayezid, was premature. For a while the fall of the city was averted by a coalition among the Crusaders, but in 1444 Sultan Murad II, the grandson of Bayezid,

defeated the Polish and Hungarian Crusaders at Varna, and four years later the same fate befell a second Crusader army led by the Hungarian feudal lords.

Though Murad II died three years later, he had prepared the ground for the final solution of the Byzantine problem. This was carried out by his successor, Mohammed II (1451-1481) who for his deeds was given the title, the Conqueror. Throughout April and May of 1453 Mohammed brought up 200,000 troops to the beleaguered city. The Turks had at that time improved their siege equipment and particularly their fleet, which was now manned by Greek and Italian sailors. In Constantinople itself there was no unity and treachery was rife, especially among a section of Byzantine nobility and the richer Genoan merchants who occupied the suburb of Galata. These servants of profit saw that the fall of Byzantium was inevitable and looked only for the preservation of their privileges in Black Sea trade and the retention of their Black Sea, particularly Crimean, possessions. On May 29, 1453, Constantinople was taken by storm. The last emperor, Constantine XI, died in battle and his corpse was only found with difficulty among the piles of bodies on the streets. On the orders of Sultan Mohammed the emperor's head was hung on a post in the centre of the captured city. The Ottoman troops wrought havoc in the city, littering the streets with piles of corpses. The remaining inhabitants were finally pulled out by the maddened Janissaries, bound and dragged over corpses of the dead. These prisoners, numbering some 60,000, were all sold into slavery.

Mohammed II entered the ruined city on a white horse and soon officially declared it his new capital, renaming it Istanbul.

The seizure of Constantinople meant that now both the Asiatic and European parts of the Ottoman Empire comprised a single whole. This was important for its subsequent expansion, an expansion that was to develop in two directions—west into Europe, and east.

The second half of the 15th century saw the Ottoman Empire establish itself in the Balkans where wars were conducted with Wallachia and Moldavia and with Hungary and Poland. At the same time a number of local revolts had to be put down, the most dangerous of which perhaps for the Ottoman

Empire was the revolt that broke out in Albania under George Castriota (Scanderberg) and lasted from the 1440s till the 1460s.

Even more tangible results came from Turkey's eastern campaigns. Mohammed II had already paid attention to doing away with the independence and autonomy of the Turkic principalities in Asia Minor. But after solving this problem another immediately arose to be resolved by the same sultan.

The largest political force in Anatolia, Armenia and western Iran during the 1460s was the unification of nomadic tribes under the name Ak Koyunlu (those of the white sheep). Their leader, Uzun Hasan, tried to stand up against Ottoman expansion and took active part in the formation of an anti-Turkish coalition. Its composition was complex, including both the Roman Pope, the Venetian Republic, the emperor of Trebizonde, a kinsman of the overthrown Byzantine autocrats, and even a number of Georgian kings despite the fact that they had suffered much at the hands of Uzun Hasan's frequent invasions of Georgia in pursuit of the traditional Islamic *djihad*, or war against the infidels. But the Ottoman threat was so great that all these states, who in other conditions would have been far from friendly, held negotiations for a military alliance. Nevertheless, the mutual distrust of the "allies" made the coalition extremely unstable thereby affecting its future.

One of Mohammed II's first steps was the conquering of the Trebizonde Empire in 1461. This proved to be a not too difficult task, since the allies of the Trebizonde emperor promised much, but did little. Intimidated by the outcome of this invasion, for Uzun Hasan realized that a similar fate awaited him, he gathered together his numerous, though ill-disciplined nomadic hordes, but in 1473 at Terjan (west of Erzurum) was completely defeated. Mohammed II, however, did not pursue this victory to its ultimate conclusion, concerning himself instead with Black Sea affairs. The Ottoman fleet transported the Turkish army to the Crimean coast and in 1475 the Genoan colonies of the Crimea ceased to exist. Then Turkey began to consolidate its position on the western and eastern shores of the Black Sea. One after another Turkish fortresses were built there so that by the 16th century the Black Sea had become an internal sea in the Ottoman Empire.

Only in the north were the sultans forced to concede some of their interests, for being unable to hold on to the territory by their own forces, they began to rely on the Crimean khan, making him Turkey's vassal. These vassal relations were not stable and had to be upheld by various measures, not the least of which was clever intriguing among the Tatar nobility which ensured not only almost continuous Ottoman control over the Black Sea northern coast, but also the participation of the Crimean Tatars in the wars waged by the Ottoman Empire in both Europe and Asia.

Thus the 16th century saw the Ottoman state reach the zenith of its power, but also the beginning of its weakness and decline.

It was during that century that the Ottoman Empire achieved dizzy success in foreign conquest, but the contours of its first defeats were already being drawn. More important still, in the depths of the Turkish feudal system there began to appear the hidden defects that would gradually turn into incurable ulcers and bring with them the gradual decay and stagnation of the whole empire.

But at the beginning of the century everything went successfully, particularly in foreign policy. Under Sultan Selim I the Grim (1512-1520) the Ottoman Empire really did become the terrible scourge of its neighbours. It began in the east in a conflict with Iran. The defeat of the Iranian forces at Chaldyran in 1514 gave Selim not only the eastern part of Asia Minor and a large part of Armenia and Iraq, but also the majority of the Arab countries.

By far the most powerful among the latter was the Mameluke state in Egypt. It was thus called because for several centuries it had been ruled by dynasties that were descended from slaves (*mamelukes*) of Kypchak or Caucasian origin. They were protected by a guard of their own fellow countrymen with whose aid they had mercilessly plundered the native population of Egypt, Syria and other countries, but this fact made the power of the Mameluke sultane unstable. During the war between Selim the Grim and Ismail Sajevis of Iran, the Sultan of Egypt formed an alliance with the latter against Turkey. But Selim defeated the allies and thus opened the way into the valley of the Nile. In this way the Ottoman Empire established itself on the third continent of the Old World. Subsequently during the 1560s

and 1570s the other Arab countries of North Africa were also subjugated.

The death of Selim put an end to the further implementation of his plans, but these were furthered most successfully by his heir, Suleiman I, known as the Magnificent in the West, and the Lawgiver in Turkey. The whole of his long reign (1520-1566) was devoted to waging wars in the west and in the east. The terrible defeat of the Germans at Mohacs in 1526 made the Ottomans a threat to the very existence of the Central European Christian states. By 1529 the Turks stood outside Vienna.

Success also attended the Turks in the east. The long war with Iran which was renewed under Suleiman led first to the treaty of 1555 which largely served to consolidate Selim's conquests, and subsequently under his heirs to the peace of 1590 through which the whole of Transcaucasia was annexed by Turkey.

The wars of Selim and Suleiman enriched the Turkish nobility with the fabulous wealth from the conquered countries, part of which even today astounds the eyes of tourists in the museum of the former sultan's palace of Topkapi in Istanbul. But at the same time it was during the first half of the 16th century that the first internal symptoms of the future weakening of the empire began to mature. It was still many years before they would become evident to contemporaries, but they are clear to modern-day historians who have made a study of the social and political changes which were beginning to take place under the rule of Suleiman the Magnificent.

On the one hand there was the outward magnificence—the luxury of the sultan's harems and the riches of the Stambul markets where everything could be bought from the rarest objects produced in any part of the known world to the most beautiful slave girls brought from Poland, the Caucasus and the Ukraine. These were herded in their thousands to the slave markets of Stambul, Trebizond, Sinop and other towns. The overwhelming majority never left anything by which they could be remembered, but there were exceptions. For instance, the famous Roxelana, who became the favourite wife of Suleiman the Magnificent. The daughter of a priest from Kamenets-Podolsky in the Ukraine, she was brought to the harem of the young prince before his

accession to the throne and she ruled there until her death in 1558.

But Turkey's renown during the 15th and 16th centuries came not only from brilliant victories over its neighbours. Its achievements in the sphere of culture were also remarkable. Nor were they simply a repeat or version of what we have already seen in the caliphate of the 8th-10th centuries, though in certain aspects the kinship is unquestionable. Stambul provided a shelter for many scholars, scientists and men of culture, for example, the mathematician and astronomer, Ali Kushdji, who came to Turkey from Central Asia after the death of the scholar-king, Ulug-Beg, and died there in 1474. Geography and a number of other sciences made enormous headway under the Ottoman Empire during the 16th century, and to this day the magnificent architectural monuments in Stambul and other cities which were the work of the famous architect, Sinan, continue to astound the beholder.

These scholars and scientists were on the whole not of Turkish origins, but men from other countries, who had adopted the Islamic faith. It is a well-established fact that in 16th century Stambul the Serbian language was commonly spoken, due to the spread of Slav dialects among the Janissaries who were in the main recruited at the time from among the peoples of the Balkans. Obviously these people were completely cut off from their country with which nothing else connected them except their language and this too was lost over the subsequent centuries. There were many converted Muslims, not only among the military, but also among the civilian dignitaries, like, for example, the famous Sokollu (Sokolli) family which produced a number of viziers during the 16th and 17th centuries. Of Christian, possibly Greek origins was the famous Turkish admiral and geographer, Piri Réis, who in 1517 offered his map of the world to Sultan Selim I. It is interesting to note that it was drawn up incorporating the newest discoveries made by Spanish and Portuguese explorers in America.

But behind the magnificent facade of Suleiman's sultanate the cracks in the building of the Ottoman state were already visible to the careful observer. Nor did they escape the notice of the Ottoman government, which did all in its power to disguise them. They were the reason for many of the laws that were passed under Suleiman I. These well-

known laws were not the first attempt at legislation in the Ottoman Empire, but they undoubtedly were the most important. It has generally been shown that the very appearance of these laws came as the result of the development of social relations in the empire, and particularly their aggravation. At the time Stambul had an enormously large population and the reason for the sharp increase in the number of its inhabitants was the mass dispossession of the peasants and their flight to the city. This, in turn, was due to the increase in feudal exploitation on the fief lands, and with the limited amount of land fit for cultivation (particularly in Anatolia) resulted in the mass laying-off of workers. It was during the reign of Suleiman I that the flood of people to the cities reached such a level that the land of the *spahis* who were continually at war was left with no one to cultivate it. Therefore Suleiman passed laws that were designed to get the fugitive peasants to return to the land. The laws stipulated that those peasants who had lived for less than 15 years in a new place (20 years if that place was a city) were required to return to their original lands. The new laws also fixed the size of peasant allotments, for it was discovered that these had previously been determined quite arbitrarily.

One other circumstance at the time also troubled the rulers of the Ottoman Empire. Under Suleiman I the beginnings of the impoverishment of the small and medium fief holders were already being noted, while the big landowners were seen to be getting richer. In other words, the fiefs were gradually being turned into unconditional feudal holdings. In the 16th century this process was only just beginning, but by the end of the century it was fairly well pronounced.

The social struggle in Turkey began during the early period of the Ottoman Empire. It took place as a rule under the banner of religion, particularly in the form of different versions of Shiism, and was frequently exploited by Turkey's enemies. The anti-sultan movements in Asia Minor in the early 16th century were of this kind. Their leaders had contacts with Shah Ismail of Iran, and the participants in the revolts called themselves *kızylbashi*, after the name of the shah's comrades-in-arms. Some of those who took part in the revolts came from tribes which gave their support to the Sefewid shahs.

On the eve of his war against Ismail, Selim I

mercilessly destroyed this opposition, practising genocide against all real or suspected allies of Iran. For a time the movements died out, but appeared again with much greater force during the second half of the 16th century. Their culminating point came precisely at the time when the Ottoman Empire had achieved its greatest successes in war. The victories in the west, the conquests in Africa and the successes in the war against Iran would, it might be thought, have stabilized the internal power of that mighty empire. Before it the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire quaked; and despite the unsuccessful outcome of the naval battle at Lapanto in 1571, the Ottomans still remained a fearsome enemy to Spain, which at the time was the most powerful of the Christian countries. Turkey's relations with a number of other European countries, however, were quite different. With France, for example, Turkey had friendly relations in the 16th century culminating in 1535 with the signing of a treaty between Suleiman and Francisque I which was advantageous both to the French government and to French trade.

Russo-Turkish relations at first were also fairly satisfactory, even though through his marriage to Sophia Palaeologus Ivan III symbolized the link between the Russian state and the declining Byzantium. This notwithstanding, Russo-Turkish relations continued normal for a fairly long time. It was only during the 1520s that serious changes began to appear and these were subsequently made worse when Russia annexed the khanates of Kazan and Astrakhan, when the princes of Adyghe joined Russia, and finally when the Crimean khans, who were vassals of the sultan, saw Russia as a threat to their hegemony in the steppes to the north of the Crimea. It was this that led to the first Russo-Turkish conflict in 1569 during the reign of Selim II, the son of Suleiman and Roxelana. Emboldened by the military successes of his father and grandfather, Selim II involved himself in a number of political ventures such as the loudly proclaimed Astrakhan campaign of 1569. The immediate cause of this was Russia's annexation of the middle and lower Volga regions. This took place while Suleiman was still alive, but the old, politically skilled sultan was in no hurry to take any action, although the first plans for the Astrakhan campaign had been discussed as early as 1564.

It was another matter with Selim II, who suddenly remembered the "flouted rights" of the overthrown Muslim khans of the Volga Area.

On the eve of the campaign Turkey signed a treaty with Poland which at the time was Russia's enemy. But Stambul's hopes on the Polish king, Sigismund II Augustus, undertaking joint action against Russia were not realized. The Turkish forces had to act alone, since the planned raid by Devlet Ghirei, the khan of the Crimea, on Russia was held up and only occurred later after the Turkish campaign was already over. This latter was poorly prepared for and unsuccessful. The Ottoman troops advanced along the Don to the Perevoloki (a narrow strip of land between the Volga and the Don) and there began to dig a canal between the two rivers in the hope of being able to get their fleet on to the Volga. But the work proved to be too difficult. The soldiers died *en masse* and discontent was high among the Janissaries who were not used to constructing large earthworks or to the geographical conditions of the locality, and the troops had to be withdrawn.

Selim's East European campaign, like the subsequent bandit raids by Devlet Ghirei on Moscow and the southern regions of Russia only served to exacerbate Russo-Turkish relations and undoubtedly had far-reaching consequences in that direction.

But incomparably worse was the internal strife in the state, particularly during the 1590s, when the whole of Asia Minor became engulfed in the Jelali revolt. These were in the main impoverished fiefholders and peasants who had risen up against the power of the sultan at precisely the time of Turkey's greatest successes in the east, when the whole of Transcaucasia fell into her hands. The Jelali insurrection extremely weakened the Ottoman Empire and made it possible for Iran, then under Shah Abbas I, to gain military revenge by not only winning back a large part of Transcaucasia, but also taking

Iraq. This was a serious and hitherto unknown defeat. It is true that the main achievements of Abbas I were lost in the wars waged against Turkey by his son, Safi I (1629-1642), Iraq being returned to the Ottomans according to the treaty of 1639. But nevertheless it was in the east, in the war with Iran that the decline of Turkey's military success first became evident.

Half a century later the heavy defeat suffered by the Ottomans at Vienna at the hands of the Polish king, Jan III Sobieski, in 1683 clearly showed the European states that the military supremacy of Turkey was a thing of the past. Meanwhile in Stambul the politicians began feverishly trying to understand the causes of what happened, at first in the country's military organization and subsequently in its social foundations.

On the whole, though, the 17th century was relatively favourable for the Ottoman Empire, even though the new breed of sultans were much smaller men than their predecessors. By the late 16th century accession to the throne began to depend on the will of the Janissary commanders, and the latter frequently, when overthrowing a ruler they didn't like, were forced to crown obviously defective princes in order to maintain the royal Ottoman dynasty. However, this at times was done intentionally, for such sultans made it possible for those who had given them the throne to actually rule the state themselves.

No outward grandeur could any longer conceal from contemporaries the lamentable condition of that huge feudal empire that stretched across three continents, when the capitalist states of Holland and England were scouring the oceans and seizing overseas lands, when absolutist France during the reign of Louis XIV became for a time the most powerful state on the European continent and when eventually the young state of Russia, strengthened by the reforms of Peter the Great, would become one of the most powerful European countries.

Absolutism or Medieval Despotism?

State formations in 11th-15th-century Iran. After the temporary renaissance of state formations in Iran on the ruins of the caliphate, there began

Western Asia

a time of great ethnic and political changes in the country. In the first place they were the result of the broad westward expansion of various Turkic tribes

and nomadic groups from Central Asia which began with the Seljuk invasion in the 11th century and ended with the massive migrations of Turkic tribes following the Mongol conquests and the campaigns of Tamerlane (14th-15th centuries). Finally the population of Iran came to resemble an ethnic kaleidoscope, which in many respects has been preserved to this day.

After the fall of the Hulaguid Mongol state in Iran (second quarter of the 14th century), various state formations arose here one after the other, which tended to be headed by the nobles of various Turkic tribes. During the time when the Ottoman Empire was being formed in western Asia Minor, eastern Asia Minor, historical Armenia, part of Syria, Mesopotamia and western Iran were inhabited by tribes that spoke various Turkic dialects that more or less resembled the Azerbaijanian language that had been formed during the 13th-15th centuries in southern Azerbaijan and eastern Transcaucasia.

In the second half of the 15th century when the whole vast land area of eastern Asia Minor, Armenia and western Iran was ruled by a union of nomadic tribes which called themselves the Ak Koyunlu (those of the white sheep), the small principality of Ardabil had consolidated itself in the north-western part of Iran. This principality was ruled by the Sefewid dynasty, which traced its descent to the Prophet Mohammed. In fact, as is now well known, the Sefewids were originally Iranians, who were called Kurds in the sources. One of these people who lived in the 14th century wrote verses, the language of which was close to Talyshi, a language which in fact was none other than the then existing Iranian dialect of Azerbaijan—Azari. But the descendants of this poet forgot the language of their ancestors so that Shah Ismail who founded the Sefewid state and also wrote verses, now wrote in the Azerbaijanian language. The poetry of this shah, who wrote under the pseudonym of Khatai, is now considered a classical work of Azerbaijanian literature.

The father and grandfather of Ismail, who were of the Shiite faith, had the support of several nomadic Turkic tribes from Azerbaijan, Iran, eastern Asia Minor and even Syria and Iraq. One of these tribes was called the Rumlu, from the word *Rum* which meant Asia Minor, another was called the Shamlu from the word *Sham* which meant Syria.

Later some of these tribes merged with the Azerbaijanians, others joined the Turkish people, and others still, like the Kadjari and Afshari in Iran and the so-called Turkemen in Iraq and Syria, are still today ethnically independent groups. With the support of these tribes the father and grandfather of Ismail systematically plundered Georgia, Daghestan and other countries from where they brought slaves and booty, though at the cost of their own lives. Thus during the northern campaign to Shirwan and Daghestan in 1488 Haydar, the father of Ismail, was killed, and later in a skirmish with the Ak Koyunlu the elder brother of the future founder of the state ended his earthly existence.

Ismail was forced to go into hiding for a while at Ghilyan, where he spent time improving his theological education. But later, by exploiting the discord in the Ak Koyunlu state, he gathered together his supporters from the previously mentioned tribes who had been dispersed and won a victory over the Ak Koyunlu. In 1501 he was crowned shah of Iran.

Ismail and his heirs relied for support on those same Turkic tribes as well as on the Talyshi, who from time immemorial had supported his ancestors. These tribes were known as the *Kyzylbashi* (red heads) from the turbans they wore that had twelve purple stripes symbolizing the twelve Shiite Imams—the lawful descendants of Mohammed and the canonized ancestors of Ismail himself. Hence the state that was founded by Ismail is often called the *Kyzylbashi* state.

It was not, however, an ethnic Persian state, as it is sometimes called. During the 16th century at least, and even later, it was a typical medieval oriental conglomerate that was led by various tribal nobilities who were alien to the majority of the settled population.

The first ten years of Ismail I's rule (1500-1524) were marked with grandiose military victories. He did away with the state of the Ak Koyunlu fairly quickly, taking over the territory of what is now Iraq and eastern Asia Minor. In the east he took Khorasan and other provinces. The culminating point of his victories was the battle of Merv in 1510, in which the Uzbek Sheibani Khan was killed and after which Ismail established himself for a short time even in Maverannakhr.

Emboldened by fortune's favour the shah-poet with the encouragement of his nomadic comrades-

in-arms decided to play a grand political game in the west. Ismail's soldiers had coped well when it was a question of fighting the same sort of nomadic cavalry as themselves or plundering countries like Georgia, Armenia and Shirwan that for centuries had been torn apart by wars and strife, but they were quite unprepared for a war with such a powerful state as the Ottoman Empire. The conflict between the two had begun to mature when Sultan Bayezid II (1481-1512) sat on the throne. Both potentates indulged at first in diplomatic quarrelling with the exchange of highly unflattering messages. The Ottomans were of the Sunnite faith, while the Sefewids were Shiites and these quarrels went on under the guise of religious differences. According to contemporaries, both the sultan and the shah kept hogs to whom each gave the name of the other.

The exchange of these kinds of greetings finished immediately after the ascension of Selim the Grim (1512-1520). There began instead a political and military game in which the players gambled with the fates not only of the adjacent areas of Asia Minor and Armenia, but also the Arab countries of Western Asia, and even Egypt. The latter entered into negotiations with Ismail, but in 1514 Selim I made a rapid raid on Sefewid territory, thereby interrupting the talks that were proceeding on the possibility of an alliance. In the same year at Chaldiran (north-east of Lake Van) he inflicted a crushing defeat on the brave but ill-disciplined Kyzylbashi cavalry, which apart from anything else had no decent artillery. The Turks seized the Iranian transports, the shah's harem and the golden throne of Ismail, which can still be seen today in a museum in Istanbul. While the demoralized Ismail was feverishly gathering his troops from the hinterland provinces of Iran, Selim conquered Syria and Egypt. The war between the Sefewids and the Ottomans continued with interruptions throughout the whole of the 16th century. Victory as a rule went to the Turkish sultans who deprived their enemies one after another of their possessions. The victory at Chaldiran gave the Turks firm control over eastern Asia Minor, western Armenia and Iraq. The Shiite Kyzylbashi who supported the Sefewids were either killed in battle or driven out. Those who survived went over to the Sunnite religion.

The Sefewid state declined as fast as it had grown. During the 16th century it was a decentral-

ized feudal conglomerate in which all land was held by the nomadic tribal nobility. Ismail I realized that little faith could be put in the Kyzylbashi emirs and while he was militarily successful tried to limit their power. Thus he gave the post of *wakil*, the highest position in the state after the shah, to representatives of the settled Iranian nobility, but after his defeat in battle with Turkey he was forced to return it to the Kyzylbashi. Ismail's descendants were completely dependent on the latter. The story is told that while Ismail's son Tahmasp I (1524-1576) was still a boy the Kyzylbashi emirs began a scuffle in the shah's tent during which an arrow even hit the ruler's crown. The local emirs began less and less to reckon with the central government, which now depended entirely on the solidarity of the nobility in the face of foreign threat (from the Turks or the Uzbek khans of Central Asia) and upon its ability to intrigue between the various factions of Kyzylbashi nobles. And then in 1578-1579 things reached their logical conclusion. In the words of a contemporary: "The foremost of the Kyzylbashi emirs ... concluded a treaty and an alliance with each other, taking into their own hands the affairs of the Iranian state and dividing its provinces between them."

In some provinces emirs had one of the Sefewid princes as a nominal ruler; others managed without them. To all intents and purposes the state of the Sefewids ceased to exist as a united power. Then from the east the Uzbek feudal lords, taking advantage of this, increased their pressure on Khorasan, while from the west the Ottoman forces moved forward to conquer Iran. In the following year they took Transcaucasia, where the fragmented Kyzylbashi army either surrendered, or offered weak resistance. Defeated by the Turks they were forced to move off with their tribes further into the interior of Iran.

In these troubled times the majority of the feudal nobility of Iran began to realize that if things continued in this way, they would lose not only their masters, the Sefewids who were supposedly descended from the Prophet, but also their possessions, rights and privileges which would pass to the Ottoman and Uzbek feudal lords. Forced back into the territory of Iran proper the Kyzylbashi began to unite and share the country with the settled nobility who were mostly Iranians as well as with the mer-

chant and craft hierarchy in the towns. These latter at the time were still numerically large, some of them—the Tebriz, the Meshkhed and the Isfahan—numbering at least 100,000.

In this complex situation initiative was shown by the emirs of Khorasan who were from the Ustadjlu and Shamlu tribes. In 1587 they put the seventeen-year-old Prince Abbas on the throne in the belief that he would be their loyal servant and at the same time their banner in the struggle for the restoration of the former Kyzylbashi state to be actually ruled by the Kyzylbashi nobility.

The Sefewid state under Abbas I. But their belief in the obedience of the prince was not justified. This was due to both objective circumstances and the character of Abbas himself. The young prince turned out to be quite an exceptional person. Of course, when we try to evaluate him as a statesman, we must realize that the official court historians who wrote about him during his lifetime were limitless in their praise. Chief among these was Iskander Beg Munshi, who was from the Kyzylbashi tribe of the Turkemen. On the official orders of Abbas he wrote an enormous work entitled *Alam-ara-yi Abbasi* (Abbas' History that Adorns the World), in which he spared no effort to present his august patron to posterity in the most advantageous light. Fortunately we also have a number of other documents originating from neutral or even inimical observers.

But there is another, quite different matter at issue. Abbas not only managed to restore the Iranian state, but to strengthen it so that for a time it constituted a powerful rival to what was then the scourge of Europe, the Ottoman Empire. This resulted in the fact that more recent historiography, both European and, particularly, Iranian during the time of the Pahlavi dynasty, not only awarded Abbas the title of Kabir (the Great), but did everything to make him appear to justify this title.

There is no doubt that Abbas I was a great statesman and a fine soldier, but far from everything he did can be considered historically progressive even in the limited meaning of this concept as applied to the state of Iran in the 17th century. As an individual Abbas was extremely contradictory. For all his inquisitive mind, his love of knowledge and his love for poetry—he was a poet

himself—Abbas I was at the same time a classical example of what is generally known as the oriental potentate. He was cruel, cunning and suspicious of everyone and everything, not even trusting his own closest entourage, and he set no value on the loyalty of those he believed he had no further use for.

In the 16th-century Sefewid state the dominant form of lay landownership was the *tiyul*—the granting of land or other income for a fixed period or for life in exchange for services rendered. Naturally the European, and particularly the French explorers of the period compared the *tiyul* with the *beneficium*. Although formally the state was considered the supreme owner of all land, in fact it had no power over it. Abbas' land reforms largely related to two areas. First, the rights of the *tiyulders* were somewhat limited and brought more within the control of the state. Secondly—and this was far more important—Abbas and his closest descendants took large areas of land from the private land-owners to form enormous royal domain (*khass*). This domain increased in size up to the middle of the 17th century and at the time of its greatest extent included whole provinces like Mazandaran and Fars. The revenue from the *khass* was the personal property of the shah and it became the basis for the material power of the central government in Iran during the 17th century.

From the reign of Abbas onwards the Kyzylbashi emirs ceased to be the complete masters that they had been in the early part of the century. The totality of measures taken in this direction may be seen to indicate an expansion of the social base of the shah at the expense of reducing the rights of the Kyzylbashi nobility and increasing those of the nobility of other tribes like the Kurds and the Lurs and, which is particularly important, of the settled feudal lords. The Shiite clergy, which had traditionally enjoyed the patronage of the shah, now played a great role in the state. The shah also began to take greater notice of the urban hierarchy and the Iranian civilian bureaucracy and to rely upon the power of the *ghulamas* (slaves) who were recruited in the manner of the Turkish Janissaries from conscript soldiers of Christians from the Caucasus that had been converted to Islam and formed the royal guard. Two lists still exist of the emirs of the Kyzylbashi state, one compiled at the death of Tahmasp I (1576) and another at the death of Ab-

bas I (1629). A comparison of these lists confirms the above conclusion.

Finally the military reforms of Shah Abbas. Western scholars have largely connected them with the activity of the Sherley brothers, two English adventurers who attached themselves to the court of Shah Abbas at the very end of the 16th century. Now it has been shown that the role of the Sherleys has been exaggerated although in some things they did aid the shah. The military reforms amounted to the following. In the 16th century the Iranian army was simply a levy of the Kyzylbashi tribes under the command of their leaders, and thus the shah was completely dependent upon the latter. Though he kept the Kyzylbashi levies, he made much greater use of other tribes, particularly the Kurds and the Lurs. But his most important reform was the attempt to make something like a permanent army. It consisted of the above-mentioned corps of *ghulams* together with a corps of musketeers (*tufengchi*) and recruited from the settled population. Finally he set up the manufacture of cannons and formed a special artillery corps (*tuphane*). All this allowed the shah to become independent of the self-willed Kyzylbashi emirs and increase the overall fighting power of the Iranian army which was essential in wars with Turkey and in operations in the south, where Abbas with the help of the English drove out the Portuguese from the islands of the Persian Gulf.

Abbas conducted a series of successful wars in the west and the east, considerably extending thereby the size of his state. The central government was much strengthened and the Kyzylbashi emirs bowed their heads in sufferance—at least those of their number who were concerned to keep them on their shoulders. The shah became an autocratic monarch. The military might of the country was on the whole manifested before the signing of the treaty with Turkey in 1639 which fixed the lines of the Iranian-Turkish border. This border was almost identical to the one that exists today.

After this Iran fought no major wars till the fall of the Sefewid dynasty in the early 1720s.

For a long time the country seemed to flourish and gain in might. In the 17th century it was visited by a number of Europeans including Tavernier, Chardin, du Mans and Sanson and others who have left circumstantial descriptions of the country. These

descriptions not only contain enormous factual material on the history of Iran in the 16th and 17th centuries, but serve as just as interesting a source for comparing conditions in France during the period of absolutism in the reign of Louis XIV with those in Iran under the Sefewid shahs. All these explorers who came to Iran for various reasons (commerce, missionary work, etc.) consciously or unconsciously compared the situation in Iran with that in their own countries, noting the similarities and differences. For example, in considering the social and economic position of Iran they used European categories which were not always adequate. Thus, whereas a comparison of the *tiyul* and the *beneficium* has a certain basis (although the European *beneficium* is not entirely identical with the Iranian *tiyul*), in other cases the differences between the terminology used and the actual phenomena to which the terms refer are much greater. For example, the explorers describe the *karhane* (lit. "workhouses") by comparing them with European manufacturing shops. At first glance this would seem to be the case. The *karhane* were huge workshops set up by the state, or occasionally by local rulers. Their produce during the 17th century was used to satisfy the needs of the royal court and the permanent army. Thus the similarity between them and the state manufacturing shops in France appears evident. But a closer study reveals radical differences. First of all, there were no private manufacturing shops in Iran that developed from the natural division of labour as early capitalist enterprises. The *karhane* were an age-old institution in Iran that went back to the early medieval period. The appearance and development of these manufacturing shops was not due to the growth of commodity-money relations, but to the relatively low level of the latter. The *karhane* were part of a subsistence economy and it was precisely this that they served. Small-scale commodity production had long existed in Iran parallel to the *karhane*.

The development of the craft industries and internal trade in Iran in the 17th century, a time of peace, led incidentally to substantial changes in the role of the *karhane*. According to the sources, part of them, particularly the weaving shops, went into decline since the court found it cheaper to buy cloth from the craftsmen. Perhaps it was here that qualitative changes first occurred in the Iranian economy, but this is a question that still remains unclear.

Another interesting circumstance attracted the attention of the European travellers in Iran in the 17th century. The importance of the so-called civilian bureaucracy had grown considerably in comparison with the previous century. Let us remember that in 17th-century France during the period of absolutism the third social estate had begun to play a much greater role in government to the great indignation and annoyance of the frequently impoverished nobility.

Outwardly an analogy with France again came to mind. There Louis XIV, the "Sun King" who had declared "L'état est moi", was a ruler who played at balancing the social estates. Similarly Abbas I in Iran also kept the feudal lords in check by replacing them at court with all kinds of upstarts and thus expanded the influence of the enormous civil service that existed in the capital and the provinces.

Perhaps it was only a distinctive characteristic of the oriental potentates who unlike the more "humane" European monarchs simply cut off recalcitrant heads without investigation or trial (whereas in 17th-century France the bringing to heel of a wayward count required the collection of evidence, a trial and other formalities), but Abbas I with a wave of the hand doomed whole tribes and peoples to annihilation. It is here that a thorough comparison reveals the fundamental difference between the 17th-century state of the Sefewids and the absolutist monarchies of Europe of the time. It was noted by the more attentive of the European travellers in Iran, who saw that country comparable with the Ottoman Empire rather than with the European West. It is true, they leaned more, so to speak, on the ethical and legal side of the question, but we can continue their thinking today when we have the opportunity to compare both foreign and local material on Iran, thus being in a better position to find an external similarity between the European and Iranian institutions and essential radical distinctions between them.

This radical difference lies primarily in the fact that 17th-century Iran was a feudal country with the absolute domination of a system that far from being a developed feudal system was in many cases pre-feudal, coming as it did from the social relations that existed among the Kyzylbashi and other nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes who constituted,

incidentally, no less than one-third of the population. Iran at the time was a motley weave of various social relations among which were those that had been developed in the settled population by over a thousand years of feudalism.

Trade too under the patronage of the shah flourished in 17th-century Iran. It is not surprising therefore that soon after the ascension to the throne of Abbas' heir, Sefi I (1629-1642), a decree was issued relating to the silk trade, which was very important at the time. Under Abbas it had been a state monopoly (another measure for increasing state revenues), but Sefi's decree allowed private trade by silk merchants, most of whom were Armenians living in Isfahan. Under Abbas these merchants had enjoyed great influence at court and this grew even stronger under his heirs. Originally they had come from Djulfa-on-the-Araxes in Armenia, which was destroyed by Abbas at the time of the "great migration", and had been subsequently deported to Iran. They were people alien to the Muslim majority of the country and their existence depended wholly on the mercy of the shah. As soon as the artificially created centralized state of the Sefewids began to shake—and this was becoming evident towards the end of the 17th century—the Armenian merchants began to look for other patrons, frequently outside Iran.

At the same time the Kyzylbashi nobility, particularly in the provinces where through ancestral rights they ruled whole regions, had only been slightly subdued by the threatened terror of Abbas I. Furthermore, from among the *ghulams* had come a number of feudal families who had risen easily enough in society but had found holding their position far more difficult as they had no support of a tribe and its levies. Interesting here is the story of one great soldier, Allah Verdi Khan, who had served Abbas. He appears to have been of Georgian extraction, being taken from home as a child and forced to become a *ghulam*. Abbas was in his debt for a number of victories in the war with the Turks and with other foreign enemies. The riches and privileges granted to him were inherited—he died while Abbas was still alive—by his sons, Imam Kuli Khan and Dawud Khan. The first became the governor of Fars, which was virtually the whole of southern Iran. The other controlled the strategically important Karabakh. But during Sefi's reign

they both fell into disgrace and were rapidly deprived of their possessions and their wealth with Imam Kuli losing his life and Dawud being forced to flee.

This example is very indicative—not so much as a typical biography of a non-nobleman who had risen, but for another reason. If this kind of parvenu did not actually envisage the sort of fate that befell the sons of Allah Verdi Khan, he might well have feared it. Consequently the time he spent ruling this or that province or fulfilling this or that position of authority was used for every conceivable means of extortion and the people most to suffer, of course, were the peasants and townsmen under his control. Thus it became almost the rule that regions governed by the shah's servants or given over to his favourites were more brutally exploited than those which were ruled by the local "hereditary" feudal lords. Consequently they were ruined more quickly with the result that the state received less revenue and became weaker.

It cannot be said that the shahs, or rather their ministers did not realize this. They even took steps to prevent it with governors and high civil servants frequently being replaced. Sometimes heads rolled and property was confiscated, but as time drew closer to the end of the century, transferring to another region or another duty became far more the norm. The sources contain many examples of one khan or another, who had been excessively extortionate, but who nevertheless maintained face before the throne, moving from one province to the next at the head of a caravan loaded with the plunder from his previous post. And in the new post everything would go on as before.

In the second half of the 17th century the central government was forced to take other measures. Whereas previously the shah's domain had grown continually to reach its maximum size by the 1660s, later the lands of the domain began to be leased out on the basis of that same *tiyul*. In this way the gov-

ernment recognized the artificiality and inviolability of the *khass* system, which to a large extent had been the basis for strengthening the shah's power in the first half of the century.

Matters continued in this way in Iran until the first few years of the 18th century. The external magnificence of the empire, the luxury of the shah's court, its enormous revenues and its even greater expenses could no longer hide the internal dissolution of the state. This could be seen in the ruination of the peasants and the townsmen, the terrible corruption among the authorities and even in the condition of the army. The latter was not so immediately evident, because after 1639 Iran became involved in no major wars. But the European travellers of the 1660s and 1670s noted that the cannon foundry was just a name and that old cannons from Abbas I's time were lying about near the shah's palace. That the shahs themselves as representatives of the ruling dynasty became increasingly more degenerate and petty as persons may be the result of a number of accidental causes, but it is equally possible that it was also due to objective circumstances. We know that when Shah Suleiman died in 1694 the court hierarchy refused to crown his eldest son, a man who had the makings of a gifted ruler. Instead another of his offsprings, Hussein, was crowned. According to the Russian Ambassador, A. Volynsky, the new shah was a fool the like of which one rarely met even among the common people, let alone among royal personages. Revolts that broke out in the provinces and that were led by local feudal separatists found the power of the shah in a more than humble condition. In 1722 the leader of the mutinous Afghan tribes, Mir-Mahmud, easily took Isfahan, the capital of the empire. The captive descendant of the Kyzylbashi warriors handed over power to Mir-Mahmud, begging only to be left his favourite wives. It was at that time that the Ottomans began to advance against western Iran. The state was in a virtual state of collapse.

Chapter V

Feudal Society in North Africa

Natural conditions and their influence on the social and economic development of the region. In the early 7th century North Africa was part of the Byzantine Empire. The appearance of elements of a feudal system there, however, relates to a much earlier period. In the 3rd century A. D. this region was one of the most economically developed in the whole of the Roman Empire. The social and economic development of North Africa would in all probability have led to the early formation of feudal relations here of a type similar to those in Europe. But that did not happen for a number of reasons, one of the most important being the geographical factor. Those areas of North Africa which were the most fertile, which were sufficiently humid and which were best for farming were comparatively small. They tended to lie along the southern coast of the Mediterranean or along the low massifs of the Tell Atlas Mountains in such countries as Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Libya. A large area of arable land was also found in the northern part of the High Plateau between the Tell Atlas and the Saharan Atlas. Here were the old agricultural regions of North Africa. Running in a strip from the Atlantic Ocean to Egypt these areas, for all their length, were comparatively narrow. They were at their widest in the Roman provinces of Zeugitana, Bizaecum and Numidia (which covered present-day Tunisia) and at their narrowest in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica (present-day Libya). This narrow strip of land with its settled farming population was extremely vulnerable to attack from the nomadic hordes who occupied the whole periphery of the Ro-

man (and later the Vandal and the Byzantine) provinces.

To the south, in the southern belt of the High Plateau and further beyond the Saharan Atlas the fertile areas were very few and far between, being centred around water sources and oases. The rest of the dry land was unsuitable for farming either because of the lack of water or because of the high salt content of the soil. These lands could, however, be used for animal husbandry, and stockbreeding, whether pastured or nomadic, had been practised there since ancient times. Thus the natural environment here conditioned two types of farming. The humid Mediterranean climate was suitable for agriculture and horticulture, while the steppes and the desert regions could be used for stockbreeding. Climatic conditions predetermined the two types of farming in North Africa and consequently the two types of population. Where there were no mountains the land could be successfully farmed, but these areas were exceptionally vulnerable to nomadic incursions. This, for example, was the situation in Tunisia and Oran. On the other hand, the high mountain ranges while protecting the coastal regions and their agricultural population from nomadic incursions, nevertheless contained dangers of their own—they were populated by communities of mountain farmers who on occasion presented no less a danger than the nomads. This was the case in the Atlas Mountains in Morocco and in Greater and Lesser Kabylia in Algeria.

Thus natural environment conditioned social development. Along the coastline lived the settled

agricultural population. Behind these were isolated mountainous agricultural communities. Further south still in the deserts was the nomadic periphery. The relations between the latter and the settled agricultural world run right through the whole history of North Africa from the Arab invasions to the time when that society came face to face with capitalist Europe.

The nomadic population, which had continued to increase in size throughout its history, had long existed in the regions beyond the agricultural coastline. Its earliest historically traceable ancestors appear to have been an indigenous population of Berber extraction. Their number increased in proportion to the productive forces of the region, in particular the appearance of the camel. The breeding of this animal meant an enormous step forward in the economic life of the nomads. Thanks to the camel the nomadic way of life was able to become firmly established in North Africa and the nomads were able to exert strong pressure against the settled agricultural regions. This became particularly intense, for example, during the period from the Gordianus revolt (238-240) to the end of the century. Then the Berber threat to the urbanized and Romanized provinces of North Africa increased to such an extent that it became the main problem of the century. The need to defend their lands from the nomads resulted in the building of a system of Roman frontier fortifications (*limes* and *centenarium*) along a line which essentially represented the border between the settled and the nomadic regions. Thus even before the Arab invasion the nomadic periphery was beginning to have increasingly greater importance for North Africa.

But nomadic influence on the settled regions was not purely limited to the threat of military invasion. The nomadic tribes were a continued reminder of the customs, traditions and social institutions of a society that was organized on tribal principles.

The Arab invasion. The Byzantine period brought economic growth to North Africa through extensive foreign trade in agricultural and stock farming produce. But the early process of feudalization was interrupted by events of great magnitude which brought about immense changes and directed the course of North African history into a completely new channel. In the 7th century North Africa was invaded by the Muslim Arabs, the over-

whelming majority of whom had not long before been nomadic themselves. The Arabs were the dominant people in the conquered country, having first driven out the Byzantine overlords and then either subjugated or driven out the local Berber tribal chiefs. The system established there by the Arabs was conditioned by the level of socio-political and socio-economic development of both the local Berber population and the conquering Arabs themselves.

According to Islamic legal scholars, the Arabs were supposed to have had from the very first an orderly system of laws which governed their actions vis-à-vis the local population of a country they had conquered. In fact, however, this system was not developed until much later. The establishment of a reasonably orderly and well-regulated administration and taxation system in North Africa did not take place until the end of the 7th century, which was slightly later than in other provinces of the caliphate. The conquest itself began with plundering raids. For several years during the reign of Omar (634-644) they were simply undertaken on the personal initiative of the Arab generals in Egypt with plunder as their main objective. They were directed mainly at Cyrenaica and occasionally at Tripolitania.

During the reign of Osman (644-656) military campaigns into North Africa became a state undertaking. The year 670 saw a turning point in the invasion when the first Arab town in North Africa, Qairuan, was built in the south-west of Tunisia.

Land tenure and taxation. In the very early period of Arab rule the methods used to exploit the local population were simple. There was a fixed tribute to be paid to the new rulers annually to which all members of an urban or rural community had to contribute according to the discretion of their leaders.

Only in the reign of Caliph Abd al-Malik (685-705) were taxation reforms introduced which both regulated the system of levying and put it on a new basis. This basis was the establishment of state ownership of the land. By the 7th century the concept of landownership was well known to the Arabs. The concept of tribal ownership was extended to cover whole areas in which the tribe's winter or summer pastures, watering places and nomad

camps lay. Some of the townsfolk also owned plots of land, mainly in the form of gardens.

The state form of ownership and its corresponding form of exploitation evidently best suited the social organisation of yesterday's nomads now headed by the trade aristocracy. Very likely the specific economic and political conditions of life in North Africa played a part in establishing state ownership of the land. Thus, for example, there was the presence of a militant nomadic periphery which was directly hostile to the Arabs and which competed with them in exploiting the settled farming population. There was also the fact that the nomads did not know how to till the land and so exploited it through taxing the farmers.

In the case of state ownership of the land the state functions as the landowner, and the farmer who works the land as a permanent tenant. The rent paid to the owner of the land acquires the form of a tax. This tax the state collects from the farmers. The state thus acts as both sovereign and landowner. In the case of state ownership private ownership of the land usually does not exist, or if it does it exists to a limited degree as an exception, as the vestige of a bygone age.

State ownership was the supreme form of landownership and all land juridically belonged to the state. Persons obliged to pay taxes and other people retained or received the right to own land. The categories of ownership and taxability were various and depended on whether or not the taxable population belonged to the Islamic community.

State ownership of the land was further encouraged by the fact that the upper strata in the Islamic community were usually the leaders of one or another Arab tribe and were accustomed in this capacity to exploiting the farming population, not individually but through the community in which they lived. As well as state property there was also the personal property of the nobility. Part of the Arab army (*jund*), which was a tribal levy supplemented by professional soldiers from various tribes, divided up the conquered lands as, for example, in Egypt where the military commanders and top civil servants seized vast areas. Ultimately Omar, the second Muslim caliph, decided that owning land would deprive the army of the ability to fight and so that future generations of Muslims would continue to live under a centralized system of control, he

banned the further division of the land. But this ban would not work. The conquerors did not wait for orders from the caliph, but set themselves up as independent rulers over the lands they had taken and at their own peril waited for subsequent confirmation of their position from the supreme power. Thus centrifugal forces existed from the very beginning of the Islamic conquest of the Maghreb, producing a conflict between the central power and the local leaders. The outcome of this conflict determined who was to receive the revenues from the conquered lands that were taken in the form of taxes. At that period the most widespread form of land tenure was *qata'i*, (plot of land given to someone as one's own property). That is to say, land was granted for service. This form of landownership was called *mulk*. These plots came from the lands of the *sawafi* (see below) and could be bought, sold, bequeathed or mortgaged.

The general category of state ownership comprised several more specific forms of landownership. First, there were the lands known as the *sawafi* (clear). These were the plots whose owners had either been killed during the conquest or who had fled at the approach of the Arabs, and therefore belonged entirely to the state. They included also the *mawat* (dead) lands, i. e. those lands whose exploitation to be started required a certain amount of work, most frequently irrigation.

The next category of land was that held under private ownership, the *mulk* (or *milk*) as it was called. It belonged either to whole communities or to individuals who had taken it before the Arab invasion or to Muslim conquerors. As for the non-Muslims, in certain cases these had concluded treaties with the Arabs before the conquest. Such treaties determined the mutual obligations of both the conquerors and the conquered. The Muslims were required to respect and defend the freedom and property of the non-believers who had accepted their patronage. The non-believers for their part were required to fulfil certain duties which largely amounted to the payment of taxes, the sizes of which were determined in the treaty. Lands that had been won by the sword from their former owners also were classed as *mulk* and a land tax was required to be paid on them. The reason for this was probably the Arabs' need for people who could work the conquered lands. These people were classed

as *dhimmis*, i.e. non-believers who enjoyed Islamic patronage in exchange for the payment of taxes.

There was one further land category, the *arsh*, which belonged to the nomadic tribes (or to be more precise, to the tribal nobility). These were lands bordering on the old farming regions that were themselves unsuitable, or not fully suitable for farming.

As time passed another category was formed. Among the Arabs these became known as the *waqf* lands, but in North Africa they were called the *habus*. The essence of this type of ownership was the fact that the landowners made over their lands to the mosques and other religious institutions for charitable purposes, while retaining the right for their own families and relatives to enjoy their usufruct. This category also included sovereign-granted incomes from a certain territory to charitable institutions. Transfers of this kind were advantageous because these lands could in no circumstances be alienated (except for the rare sales of such lands by a caliph at times difficult for the state, as for example, in Morocco in the early 15th century). If there were no heirs to whom these lands might be bequeathed, they fell in escheat to the institution that had had control over them.

The main mode of exploiting these lands was taxation. The system of taxation used in North Africa, and it differed from region to region, is not known. But we can draw an approximate list of the taxes levied upon the inhabitants. They were divided into those established by the Shariah and lay taxes, the first being paid by the Muslims, the second by the non-believers. Thus Muslims were obliged to pay the *zakat*, a kind of alms for the poor Muslims in the form of an income tax. The tax existed in various forms according to the type of income it related to. Agricultural production, for example, was required to pay the *ushr*, or one-tenth of the harvest or the revenues. Muslims were required to pay a tax which went towards the conduct of holy wars against the infidels. After the war they were then required to pay a further tax of one-fifth of the captured booty.

Non-Muslim taxes included the *kharaj*, or land tax, and the poll-tax—the *jizya*, or *javali* as it was sometimes called for the performance of their own religious rites. There was also a tax on non-Muslim traders. During war the property of non-believers was

alienated in favour of Muslims in the form of captured trophies. Eventually this property reverted to the state in escheatment. Soon after the invasion of North Africa the Muslims also had to pay taxes in excess of those established by the Shariah.

The populations of those towns and regions that surrendered to the Muslims without fighting were required to pay the same sum fixed once and for ever. This payment was often made in kind rather than in money in the form of local produce or manufacture. This form of taxation proved convenient for the payers, since the scale of production could be increased, whereas the size of the tax remained the same.

A unified tax system was introduced in 693 by Hassan ibn Numan, but this resulted in increased exploitation and gave rise to greater discontent with the new authorities.

The Berber tribes against the Arabs. The policies pursued by the Islamic caliphs produced active resistance on the part of the Berbers. According to ibn-Khaldun, they accepted and rejected Islam 12 times over a period of 70 years. It was approximately at this time that North Africa was given the name Maghreb, which in Arabic means the West. During the 8th century the Maghreb was inundated with members of the Kharijite, religious and political movement in conflict with the central authorities. Their opposition was such as to create a tense situation with continual mutinees and uprisings, the most important of which took place between 721 and 741 in the Sijilmassa region, between 730 and 741 in the Tanger region, and between 741 and 750 in the Ifriqiya region. Those were the revolts by the Berbers, both nomadic and settled. These as a rule were inspired with Kharijite ideas, which reflected the spontaneous desire of the masses for a society based on equality. These uprisings led to the formation of several Kharijite states: in Qairuan in 757-761, and later from 768 to 772; in Sijilmassa from 721 to 967, in Tahart (the largest of the Kharijite states in the Maghreb) from 762 to 909. The upheavals which shook the Maghreb only ended in the early 9th century and by that time the land had been taken over completely by the Berbers twice.

North Africa in the 8th and 9th centuries. The desire on the part of various groups and individual leaders to gain independence resulted in the

breaking up of the caliphate. This was only to be expected since, first, it was impossible to govern from one capital (first Damascus and later Baghdad) a vast empire which at certain periods of its history stretched from China to the Atlantic Ocean. Then there was the fact that the power of the caliph had gradually weakened through the socio-economic processes that were taking place in the central provinces. Finally, there were the centrifugal aspirations in the periphery not only among the local ruling groups or administrative apparatuses, which wished to appropriate the vast revenues culled from these provinces without sending them to the capital, but also among the local population at large, both nomadic and settled. The caliphate separated civilian and fiscal matters from military, but this proved not to be efficient and they were soon forced to reunite them in the hands of a provincial governor.

Ultimately as a result of all this, North Africa broke away from the caliphate, and independent states were formed in that region. The appearance of the Kharijite states that we have already mentioned was only the beginning of a broader and larger-scale process. By the end of the 8th century two independent states had been formed in North Africa—the Kharijite state of the Rustamids, which lasted from 707 until 909 and the Shiite state of the Idrisids which lasted from 789 until 926. In 800 the Aghlabid state was formed in the Central Maghreb and on Sicily. This was a dependent state obliged to pay the Abbasside caliphate an annual tax in money. It lasted until 909.

The exploitation of the inhabitants of these territories was a centralized process conducted through the state apparatus in the form of taxation. After the social and political upheavals of the 9th century a period of relatively successful economic development followed. This affected farming, the crafts, mining and trade, both internal and external, the latter being with the European countries and the countries of the Sudan through long-distance caravans.

Substantial economic growth marked the 109-year rule of the Aghlabids. This was aided by a number of factors. First, they ceased to pay the enormous taxes demanded by the Abbasside caliphate (40,000 dinars as compared with the total income of 700-800 thousand dinars). Then they were favoured by weather conditions—from 800 to 863

there were no bad harvests. Then again there were the policies of the Aghlabid rulers themselves who took great pains to store water and build irrigation systems. Finally the craftsmen of Ifriqiya and Egypt were famed for the manufacture of fine fabrics, and the carpets of Ifriqiya were highly esteemed far beyond the borders of that country.

Apart from the legal taxes imposed by the Shariah, the Aghlabids introduced new taxes which were not considered legal from the point of view of Islamic law. The Aghlabids were the last power in the Maghreb to rely on the *jund*, i. e. an army consisting of professional soldiers from various tribes. It is characteristic that it was the Aghlabids who formed in North Africa a mercenary praetorian guard from black Sudanese slaves. The history of other parts of the caliphate shows that the formation of this kind of guard was accompanied by a change in the feudal structure of society.

In the second half of the 9th century North Africa was divided into several largish states and a number of small independent domains. The major states, which we have already named, were the Rustamid state and the Aghlabid state. The possessions of the Idrisids had by this time already lost the status of independent state formation. The numerous towns with their suburbs were given to the brothers and heirs of the caliph as crown domains, many of them at the time of Muhammad al-Muntasir (828-836).

In the small states ruled by the Shiites-Alids there gradually developed the practice of granting revenues from a certain territory. But subsequently this process was interrupted because being small they were too vulnerable to the nomadic tribes, which at the time were mostly Berber.

It was only in Libya that the Arabs consolidated themselves firmly. A large number of the descendants of the Arab soldiers lived in Qairuan and other Tunisian towns, but the further west the fewer they became. Thus in western Algeria and Morocco they were represented only by members of the ruling hierarchy, which was comparatively small.

The Fatimid conquest. The formation of new states in North Africa. This was the situation up till the Fatimid invasion of the whole Maghreb in the early 10th century. The political system of the region was then completely restructured and the small domains ceased to exist. In their place a number of fairly large states were formed, each with a

centralized form of state exploitation on a large scale.

The new states which arose after the Fatimid invasion were the Fatimid state proper with its capital in al-Mahdia in Tunisia (from 909 to 973) and then in Cairo in Egypt; the Zirid state with its capital first in Qairuan (from 972 to 1057) and then in al-Mahdia (from 1057 to 1148); and the Hammadid state with its capital first in Qala banu Hammad (from 1015 to 1068) and then in Bijaya (from 1068 to 1152).

The Fatimids were supported by the farming Berber tribes which were socially heterogeneous.

The social structure of the Berber tribes can be discerned from some of the sources. Unfortunately these are few and far between and by no means relate to the whole period under discussion. Therefore we must extrapolate from the information they provided on certain periods and certain tribes to cover other periods and other tribes. Thus the 10th-century Arab writer, Ibn Hawqal, in relation to the nomadic tribes writes: "The Berbers in the Maghreb live in tribes whose numbers are incalculable. To know them all completely is impossible on account of the great number of their clans all with their various branches and ramifications. They live in the depths of the wilds and are scattered all over the desert. With very few exceptions they are all descendants of Goliath. They are ruled by kings, leaders and chieftains whom they obey and never oppose. They have enormous wealth from their cattle and from the tribes living deep in the desert." From this it is evident how far property and social inequality had developed and the presence of such inequality is confirmed by other sources.

There was a similar situation among the Arab tribes, but the stratification was probably much greater. Under the Fatimids there were already tribes that were classed as free and those that were classed as dependent. The former were privileged, while the dependence of the latter took on various forms. There were client tribes who were not required to provide troops, allied tribes and tribes under patronage. The lowest category were those tribes who were obliged to pay taxes.

It is also essential to remember that in the various political combinations that existed both before and after, the old system of clan and tribal relations continued to play an important role in the lives of the

nomads, the farmers and to a certain extent the townsmen. The coming to power of one or another group was taken as the success of one or another tribe or group of tribes. The other tribes related to the one in power always tried to capitalize on this kinship and win advantages for themselves. But they also had to share in the failures of their kinsmen. Thus the Idrisids were supported by the Berbers of the Awreba tribe, the Fatimids by the Berbers of the Kutama tribe, and the Zirids and the Hammadids by tribes of the Sanhaja group. The Almoravides were supported by the Lamtuna tribe, while the Almohades brought together tribes of the Masmuda group, and so on. For this reason historians of the Maghreb have seen the history of the whole area as a struggle between various blood groups. Although we do not deny the role of these tribes and tribal groups in the history of North Africa, we cannot agree with the thesis that the internal history of the region can be explained only through conflicts between various ethnic groups.

Subsequently the periodic subjugation of the farming regions became one of the characteristic features of the historical process in North Africa. This subjugation tended to occur in the following way. The nomads of the steppe lands and the desert retained their tribal and military organization since it was the *sine qua non* of their existence. Living in poverty, they were forced to observe a strict moral code. But when they visited the farming regions, and particularly the towns they saw what they considered to be the wealth and luxury in which the townsmen lived and they were filled with jealous longing. Soon some prophet, or *mahdi*, would come along and they would unite behind him supposedly to punish those who had betrayed the faith and restore respect for the rites and worship of the true faith, and by way of compensation they would requisition the wealth of the apostates. Having proved themselves victorious in battle and driven out or destroyed the former rulers, they would assume their positions, reorganize the state and redistribute its wealth among their own ruling circles in conformity with the ideas they had brought with them from the desert. This reorganization bore the stamp of ideas that had been formed under a tribal way of life with its own peculiar system of social relations, rights and duties. Having transformed themselves from nomads to the rulers of more or less large

agricultural provinces, they themselves came under the influence of the new way of life, which modified or destroyed their former tribal and military organization. And since this was the basis for their military and political successes, its weakness spelled ultimate decline for the new dynasty and its state. The conquerors were now in the position of those whom they had conquered. Meanwhile other nomadic tribes were reorganizing with the aim of punishing the new apostates. The new tribes would oust the old and once again life would be reorganized, this time according to the ideas of the newcomers with a similar redistribution of wealth. Thus everything went back to square one and the game began again. All these conquests and political movements were covered with a religious mantle. They did little to change economic life and only served to put the clock back and retard historical progress. Developing through the discontent of the broad masses of the nomadic people, these movements were exploited from the very beginning by the tribal nobility whose aim it was to seize power and use it in their own interests. But at the same time the agricultural provinces developed in their own way economically and socially, influenced to a greater or lesser degree by the invaders and the religious and political movements, which applied their own brakes in accordance with their respective strengths.

The development of feudal relations in North Africa. During the 10th century there was a certain amount of progress in the development of feudal relations in North Africa. The sources for the period contain references to the granting of land, which in all probability are early instances of what later became known as the *iqta*. The word *iqta* in the sense of an allotment of land had in fact been used earlier, but then it had referred to the granting of domains unconditionally. But from the 10th century onwards the *iqta* came to refer to a practice that was current throughout the Islamic world of granting land according to certain conditions. Thus it meant either the right to exact and appropriate taxes from a certain area, or the right to use a certain area of state-owned land. This right could be granted by the sovereign to individuals who had performed a service to the Muslim community or who could perform such a service. In many respects it was similar to the European *beneficium*. The right

of using the *iqta* was granted in a charter, known as the *dhahir*. The first historical reference to the *dhahir* comes from the 11th century in the state of the Almoravides. The *iqta* developed as a result of the economic progress of the settled regions, where the Muslim rulers could not grant ownership of the land and at the same time were trying to cultivate the *mawat* (the "dead lands"). Furthermore, during the 10th and the early 11th centuries North Africa went through a period of economic growth. In Tunisia extensive irrigation work was carried out in a number of regions. Obviously the opportunities for using non-irrigated land had already been exhausted and in such conditions the state found it convenient to use a system of granting land conditionally as a means of economic stimulation.

The formation of feudal institutions was further aided by relations between the central government and the tribes. For example, in 804 a practice called the *makhzen* made its appearance under the Idrisids. What this amounted to was that the central government paid the tribes a fixed amount for which the latter were required to perform certain duties mostly of a military character (defending the land, protecting the roads, etc.). In time these tribes were given certain areas of land from which they could collect this money themselves in the form of taxes. To all intents and purposes this was the same as the *iqta*. The system was further aided by the existence among the nomads of ally-tribes and client-tribes.

In addition to the *iqta*, land leasing also functioned as a means of utilizing state and private lands. Such leasing was extremely common. It provided for the most varied conditions of working the soil and the combination of these conditions with the farm tools that were available to owner and tenant. In grain farming, for example, if a tenant received seed-grain and two bulls to work the land, he would be allowed to keep one-fifth of the harvest. This system seems to have been fairly common and in certain parts of North Africa it is still in use today.

There is also evidence that tax farming was not unknown. In 971, for instance, the town of Msila and the province of Zab were sold for tax farming purposes for 70,000 dinars a year. This sum had to be paid in advance. And some men grew rich on this, like Abu al-Wahhab ibn al-Husain ibn Ja'far, the Arab Maecenas, who spent enormous sums from the income he collected on amusements.

The invasion of the Banu Hilal and the Banu Sulaim and its consequences. The economic boom in North Africa did not last long. It was interrupted by two important events of a military and political character which occurred in the 11th century. First there were the invasions by two groups of Arab tribes, the Banu Hilal and the Banu Sulaim, which had once wandered in Arabia and come to North Africa via Egypt, and secondly there was the Almoravid invasion of Morocco and the West Maghreb as far as Algeria in the second half of the 11th century.

Both invasions, particularly that of the Banu Hilal and the Banu Sulaim in the east, did much to destroy the productive forces in the countries they overran. Furthermore, the whole established system of domains collapsed.

The Banu Hilal and the Banu Sulaim preferred a nomadic life and for that reason power remained in the hands of the former dynasties, the Zirids and the Hammadids, but they lost their domains. Qairuan was destroyed and the nomadic Berbers were pushed west. Small towns that stood in the way of the pasturing flocks were similarly destroyed and many lands that were under crops were turned into pastures. Only a few towns on the Tunisian coast remained more or less untouched. But the conquerors were unwilling to rule, preferring instead to exert their influence over the sultans for which purpose they accorded themselves the titles of "sultan's aides". Thus the Athbaj tribe "aided" the Hammadid sultans and the Riyah tribe "aided" the Zirid sultans.

The Hilal invasion furthered the development of feudal relations in the eastern part of North Africa. Their leaders seized the small towns and villages and forced the sultans to grant them *de jure* what they had taken *de facto*. This process was carried out on a fairly extensive scale. The nomadic way of life spread right across North Africa. Only the western part of the Central Maghreb and Morocco remained free from the Arab tribes.

Spreading out along the Eastern Maghreb the Arab tribes divided the conquered territories in the North Sahara and the High Plateau into sections running from north to south. Each section amounted to a ring of cattle-tracks which they would take a full year to traverse. The northern fringes of these sections went either up into the foothills of the Tell

Atlas, or to the suburbs of the towns. The southern fringes reached into the Sahara. Each tribe kept to the boundaries of its own section and moved along the cattle-tracks from south to north and from north to south. In April and May they would approach the settled regions of the north, a time when the main grain crops (wheat and barley) were ripening. The nomads would wait for the end of the harvest and then send in their cattle to pasture on the stubble which was usually quite high. In this way the nomads spent the summer. Then in autumn, around mid-November, they would move back south. On the way back the flocks would graze on the pastures that lay along the cattle-tracks. In December they would reach the Sahara and spend the winter there. At this time of the year there were rains in the desert and grass grew. The nomads would gather at the oases the indigenous population of which were also subjugated by the nomads, and when the latter returned to the Sahara they would collect taxes from them.

With the approach of spring the nomads set off again north so as to reach the northern fringes of their section by May. The journeys north and south went along separate, but parallel routes. Violation of the section borders resulted in war between the tribes. These wars broke out not only among the nomads, but also between the nomads and the settled population, and it was damage done to pasturage or crops of one tribe by the flocks of another that was most often the cause. The farmers tried to prevent this happening by hiring reapers who would quickly harvest the corn in a couple of days and taking it to the towns. At times the nomads would destroy the fields on purpose so as to force the peasants to accept their patronage and protection.

Patronage relations had long been customary among the Arabs, being a traditional practice in tribal society. But as applied to the settled population this practice acquired a new and purely feudal character in the new situation. In Arabic it was called *himaya* and approximated most closely to the European practice of *patrocinium*, which ultimately boiled down to the strong forcing his patronage upon the weak. The importance of the *himaya* particularly increased after the invasion of the nomadic Arab tribes and its spread was evidently one of the main ways in which feudal relations developed in North Africa after the 11th century.

At the same time in the west the invasion of the Almoravides began. Outwardly this resembled the earlier invasion of the Banu Hilal and the Banu Sulaim, mainly for the fact that it also resulted in considerable destruction of the productive forces. But here religious intolerance led to the destruction of whole populations, as occurred, for example, in the provinces of Tafilalt and Sijilmasa, although in other parts the invasion took place almost without loss of life and devastation.

The Almoravides ruled until the mid-12th century. The destruction of their state took place in 1146, which approximately marks the end of the first period in which the practice of *iqta*, or the granting of land under certain conditions, appeared, gained legal sanction and developed. The next period, which covered the 12th and 13th centuries, saw a general expansion of feudal institutions.

The general expansion of feudal institutions in North Africa during the 12th and 13th centuries. The new period began with the rise of the Almohad state in 1146 and continued under the Marinid dynasty in Morocco (1269), the Abd-el-Wad dynasty in the western part of what is now Algeria (1239) and the Hafsid dynasty in Tunisia (1237) almost till the end of the 13th century. The expeditions undertaken by the Almohads in the first years of their rule resulted in the subjugation of the whole of the Maghreb. For the first time for many centuries the whole region was under the rule of one state. The Almohad period was marked by the further development of feudal relations. Under the first Almohad caliph a land survey of all the country was carried out. Areas were measured and certain regions declared unsuitable and others suitable for farming. A *kharaj*, or land tax, was imposed on the latter; and Muslims were also required to pay it, not only the former non-believers as previously, for the Almohads considered themselves alone to be Orthodox.

The state lands were increased through conquest as well as through seizure of the *mulk* and *arsh* lands which were transferred to the category of *habus* with their former owners being required to pay the *kharaj*. In this way exploitation of the working people through taxation was fully regulated. At the same time the *iqta* was granted more freely and on a much larger scale for political purposes. These *iqta* were given to the tribal chiefs, like the leaders of the Abd-

el-Wad tribes who were given the lands between the Mina and the Muluya rivers, or the chief of the Hintata tribe, Abu Mohammed, who received the whole of Tunisia. Another tribe was given the eastern part of present-day Algeria.

Under the Almohads we can see the beginnings of a social estate system. The society was structured on three principles: religious (membership of the Almohads and the hierarchy inside the Almohad community); economic and social (*makhzen* nomadic tribes, nomadic tribes subject to tax, settled tribes subject to tax, urban merchants and craftsmen); and finally, traditional tribal (genealogical kinship with the ruling tribe or the *makhzen* tribes).

The Almohad caliphs gave many smaller *iqta* as well as the enormous areas of land that eventually became states. Among the holders of the *iqta* there is evidence of aspirations towards independence engendering feudal fragmentation. It was this that brought about the end of the Almohad state. The three new states that replaced it—the Marinids, the Abd-el-Wadites and the Hafsids, continued the same practice of rewarding allied tribes with new *iqta*. This process continued into the late 13th century.

The Hafsid state. The late 13th century saw the beginning of a period of feudal consolidation which lasted until the late 14th century. Characteristic in this context was the reign of the Hafsid Sultan, Abu Ishak Ibrahim I (1279-1282), who divided the whole territory of the country among the Arab tribes in the form of *iqta*. Attempts to correct the situation as were made by the Hafsid Sultan, Abu Yahya Zakariyya ibn al-Lyhyani (1311-1317) and return at least some of the revenue (which went to the nomads) to the state coffers met with no success. He had needed the military support of the tribes and was therefore forced to return all the *iqta* that had been taken away and even grant them new ones.

In the Hafsid state those who possessed the *iqta* were divided into three categories: (i) high-ranking personages who were close to the court and the government, and the Almohad sheikhs (the Hafsid rulers continued to consider themselves Almohads) who ran the army and evidently occupied high posts; (ii) poor sheikhs who had won themselves fame for their religious virtue; (iii) politicians who were not part of the permanent administrative bodies. The most influential and troublesome were the

leaders of the Arab nomadic tribes. As previously they took no direct part in ruling the country, but brought their will to bear on the government. Certain *iqta* gradually became hereditary and ultimately became the private property of their masters. Virtually all the larger *iqta* became independent emirates.

North Africa in the 15th-16th centuries. The subsequent development of feudal relations which took place in the 15th century and which makes it possible to treat this period as separate saw the strengthening of the individual feudal owners of both the large and the small *iqta* and the weakening of the central power. This was a time of feudal fragmentation. In principle the process was identical in all the countries of the Maghreb and the differences were only of a local character. Thus, for example, in Morocco the Berber tribes, which lived in isolation in the mountains, retained their economic, political and military importance. At this time the Marabout attacks against Portuguese and Spanish colonization began.

In the 16th century North Africa became part of

the Ottoman Empire, and the Turks formed the ruling force there. In Libya, Tunisia and Algeria, Turkish customs were introduced. The most important of these was the Turkish military-feudal system. But from a chronological point of view this period goes beyond the bounds of the present work.

Thus by the 15th century there was feudal fragmentation in North Africa, that resulted from areas of land that had once been granted by the state on certain conditions being transformed into hereditary possessions. The last stage of feudalism, viz., the absolute monarchy, was never reached. The main reason for this, in our opinion, was the continued presence and direct intervention of the nomadic periphery. The historical development of all the countries in the region can be divided into six periods, and these in turn into two major stages:

(i) the 7th to the 10th century in which a centralized form of taxation was predominant;

(ii) the 10th to the 15th century which saw the emergence, spread and flourishing of the feudal domains, mainly in the form of the *iqta* and their transformation into hereditary private property.

Chapter VI

Feudalism in Ethiopia

The Aksum Kingdom. Ethiopia is a country with a very ancient culture and history. It occupies an enormous territory in the north-east of the African continent that is populated by numerous peoples. Its known history goes back to the first millennium B. C., when migrant Semitic peoples from Southern Arabia mixed with the local Cushitic-speaking population of the Horn of Africa and began the first of many states whose economic basis was terrace-type farming and trade by sea and caravan. As this trade increased and as ties with the Hellenistic World and India strengthened a powerful kingdom arose here with its capital at Aksum. At the height of its power in the 4th-6th centuries A. D. this kingdom reached from Nubia in the north to the Ethiopian Plateau in the south and from Southern Arabia in the east to the River Atbara in the west.

This process of political centralization was accompanied by a flourishing culture. Monumental palaces and temples were built and inscriptions in Sabaean and Greek in honour of the gods carved on them. Under King Ezana (early 4th century) a writing reform was carried out when Sabaean was replaced by Ethiopic (Geez) as the language of state. This reform subsequently involved the corresponding changes to the characters of the Sabaean script so that vowels as well as consonants could be indicated. In a bid to strengthen his political alliance with Byzantium King Ezana encouraged Christianity and introduced it as the state religion in place of the former polytheism. These two reforms were destined to have a profound effect on the whole subsequent development of Ethiopian culture.

The Aksum Kingdom did not look exclusively to the Red Sea for its international trade, although the latter constituted the basic source of its wealth and power. While consolidating their control of the sea routes, the Aksumite kings simultaneously spread their power deep within the continent, taking particular pains over the defence and security of trade. They built fortresses along these trade routes where their governors were permanently present charged with the task of protecting trade and preventing banditry or any resistance to the central government. As a result, both trade itself and the presence of the royal administration inevitably resulted in the break up of the village communes and of tribal and clan relations. It can be said that in the Aksum Kingdom, in which slave-master relations existed in the capital and clan-tribal relations throughout the rest of the Ethiopian Plateau along the caravan trade routes which were under the direct control of the kings and their governors, there appeared the beginnings of new relations that approximated to the feudal. The Aksum Kingdom was powerful and rich, it possessed a strong army and navy and had a highly developed agriculture, trade, craft-manufacture and architecture. To this day in the province of Tigre the ruins can still be seen of the magnificent palaces and castles and their monumental walls. The court of the Aksumite kings had its own theatre.

With the decline of Red Sea trade—first as a result of the Persian conquests and then through the emergence and headlong rush of Islam—the Aksum Kingdom went into decline. The final blow came in the 8th century when the bellicose nomadic

tribes cut off the dying kingdom from the sea. The famous port of Adulis ceased to function and all movement along the ancient caravan roads inland came to an end. Aksum lost its importance as a trading post where goods from Africa, the Mediterranean, Arabia and India changed hands. This spelled destruction for the Aksum Kingdom.

The formation and development of feudal relations. But the political destruction of the ancient Aksum Kingdom did not end the history of the class society which had been formed within it. Cut off from the coast and from Red Sea trade and driven south to the heights of the Ethiopian Plateau, this society nevertheless lost nothing of its class character, nor of its former Christian religion, nor of its statehood or cultural traditions. Naturally, under new economic conditions and in a new ethnic and cultural milieu it was forced to find new directions for its development, giving up much that was old and acquiring much that was new.

The character of the society and its ethnic composition changed radically. Within a very short period not a trace remained of that slave-owning society at Aksum which economically relied on its international trade. But the former governors of the Aksumite kings who had lived in the south on the tributes they collected from the local farming population were able not only to maintain, but to strengthen their power, which had never been dependent on slavery as a means of production. Their power rested on military strength and noneconomic pressure brought to bear on the local farming communities. The centre of Ethiopian statehood was of necessity moved to the south where by the 10th century an early feudal kingdom had already been formed in the province of Lasta. Here under new conditions it was the enslavement of free peasants rather than foreign conquest that became the main policy of the new Ethiopian state that had survived the collapse of the Aksum Kingdom.

The Zague Kingdom. In 1137 the Zague dynasty came to power in the early-feudal kingdom of Ethiopia. The dynasty name in the Geez language meant "belonging to the Agau", which showed that the Agau farmers were the dominant people in the province of Lasta. The capital was at Begyene (or Bugne). The kings of this dynasty, like their most famous representative, Lalibala, actively strengthened their power within the narrow confines of the

provinces of Lasta, Tigre, Angot and part of Begamder and actively encouraged the development of ecclesiastical architecture and patronized the monasterial monks. Architectural monuments, like the seven churches carved out of a single cliff and many of the titles of the Zague kings and courtiers, point to a clear cultural and political continuity between the Aksum Kingdom and the Zague Kingdom. But the opportunities available to the Zague kings were far more limited than those that had been available to the kings of Aksum. Their main instrument of political domination was the army. State revenue could only come from imposing taxes on the agricultural population or extorting tribute from neighbouring tribes. The latter produced far more resources than the former which brought about an increasing desire for feudal expansion, i.e. the conquest of new territories and the subjugation of the local tribes. This, in turn, led to the conversion of the tribes from paganism to the Christian religion and their being brought under the power of a Christian king. In this, of course, the army and the military social estate in general was of paramount importance.

The Aksumite kings had relied on military power as much as they had on the power of commerce, because it was through military force that they were able to control the trade routes. The main role belonged to the king's huge army, which at any moment could be sent on a plundering or punitive expedition as we know from many of the epigraphic inscriptions in Aksum. In the new early feudal conditions the troops were required to perform much wider functions which included not only military conquest, but extorting tribute from and maintaining control over the local populations. For this reason there arose numerous military settlements on the recently conquered territories. For the soldiers who were able to exploit the local population permission to settle on the new territories was a highly prized reward. The Zague kings were not only always able to keep up the numbers of their armed forces from among the military settlers, but had in them a reliable source of support for their power in the far-off border provinces.

The money-commodity relations that were dominant in Aksum passed away together with Aksumite trade. Unable therefore to rely on them further for its pay the royal army had to content itself with the share it took of the booty and tribute

from neighbouring populations. Hence the bellicose settlers were reliable and loyal to the kings only to the extent that the latter were able to satisfy their growing appetites, which meant the pursuit of a policy of territorial expansion.

The best opportunities for such conquests in the 12th and 13th centuries lay in the agricultural regions of the south, particularly Shoa, through which a fairly prosperous caravan route to the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean also passed. Thus it was to Shoa that the monasterial colonization by Ethiopian monks and the invasions of the Christian soldiers were directed beginning with the 12th century. It is interesting here to note that in the late 12th and early 13th centuries the Christian missionaries from the northern monasteries of Tigre got much further south than the royal army.

For the monks and the military alike the fruitful south and its trade routes began to acquire considerable attraction. It is therefore not surprising that in the mid-13th century, when the central government of the Zagwe kings began to weaken through internal dynastic strife, the southern "settlers" eventually seized power and in 1270 put their own king, Yekuno Amlak, on the throne.

Ethiopia under the Solomonic dynasty. Subsequently the church chronicles presented this dynastic coup as a "restoration" of the ancient "legitimate" dynasty descended from the biblical King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba from whom supposedly all the Aksumite kings had also descended and whose power had been "usurped" by the house of Zagwe, but then restored by "Solomonid" Yekuno Amlak. Thus feudalism in Ethiopia developed in two directions: intensive—within the kingdom itself, and extensive—through territorial expansion, and of the two it was the latter which predominated due to the enormous support it received among the military.

In the fertile lands of the south the new dynasty that was descended from Yekuno Amlak was faced with counter-expansion from the Islamic trading states who had long monopolized the caravan trade with the coast. But the grandson of the dynasty's founder, King Amda Sion (1314-1344) not only defeated his Muslim rivals, but almost tripled the size of his kingdom. The *Story of King Amda Sion's Campaign* gives us an idea of what the empire of this king was like in the first third of the 14th century. From a

number of indications it would be difficult to be described as pre-feudal. Amda Sion headed an army that was divided into regiments the place-names of which show that the soldiers were already settled on the lands. Although the king sometimes asked his soldiers' advice, they would not dare to express their opinions openly and directly, but even when such opinions were given the king never paid heed to them and always acted in accordance with his own wishes.

Not that troops relations had entirely disappeared from Amda Sion army. On setting out for battle the king would give his soldiers presents of gold, silver and precious clothes and decorated everyone "from the greatest to the smallest". The soldiers themselves used to say to the king that he had "brought them up and trained them to die with him", but in the time of Amda Sion this was more a figure of speech than a historical reality, because the royal troopers had already become vassals. Furthermore, the service of these soldiers would be difficult to be described even as "vassalage without fiefs" because the king distributed his regiments throughout the provinces and allotted them lands.

But during the reign of Amda Sion, this completely feudal system of vassalage was, on the one hand, exclusively limited to the military and, on the other, left relatively undeveloped since the economic independence of the vassal was highly circumscribed.

At the same time the local rulers who had been subjugated by Amda Sion were also made vassals, but this may be called vassalage without fiefs, or fiefs in the form of tributes. It was based on no free treaty of the kind which was normally characteristic of feudal vassalage, but on military compulsion, when the local ruler who had become the king's vassal either paid tribute or fled leaving the king free to collect this tribute from the population.

But these great conquests could not remain stable. The local rulers who were reduced to a state of vassal dependency tried at the first opportunity to secede and revolt, while the suzerainty of the king was expressed primarily in his military power and ability to crush any of his "vassals". Ruling the country amounted to conducting continuous campaigns to collect tribute. This condition of eternal warfare was accepted as the normal way of life.

This kind of "indirect rule" in the face of the permanent danger of rebellion had at least one uncontested advantage. Vast territories that were totally different from each other in respect of ethnic composition, economics and culture could be ruled and successfully exploited, even if they could not be reliably controlled. Also it must be borne in mind that the royal administration proper was in an embryonic state at the time which meant that it was too weak and too small to provide the kind of reliable control over the population of each province. But this could be provided by the local ruling houses by virtue of their extraction and their place in the political organization of the local society. This system of government meant that the political centre of the kingdom was the royal court, which in the manner of a campaigning general's camp was always moving. A fixed capital-city as such was never necessary.

It was another matter with the royal domain which not only had enough means for upkeeping large military contingents around the king, but also made it possible to demand military service from the population of the domain on conditions other than those imposed on free troopers, for they were treated as being subject to the direct jurisdiction of the king. Both the first (i. e. the profitability of the domain) and the second (i. e. the power of the seigneur over a large population) were extremely important for the Ethiopian kings. Therefore they tried to include within their domains those lands through which the big trade caravans passed, for this allowed them to impose duties and make profit on the trade. At the same time Amda Sion and the other Ethiopian kings not only enlarged their domains, but also increased the size of their populations, most usually through the settling of captives from other lands. But this led to serious problems both internally and externally.

The expansion of the royal domain in Shoa under Amda Sion provoked strong resistance from the local monasteries, which had grown strong in the late 12th and early 13th centuries and which looked upon the expansion of the royal domain as a limitation of their own land-owning interests. Then there were the Muslim rulers of the trading state of Ifat, subjugated at one time by Amda Sion, who were also reluctant to acquiesce in the domination of the Christian kings and to pay the enormous taxes imposed by the latter. This forced the Ethiopian kings

to spend long periods of time in the border areas inspecting their troops and preparing for repulse. Hence the need for a stable rear was particularly great which compelled the royal government to make peace with the unyielding monks, who for their part were also experiencing serious difficulties due to the continuation of the conflict.

Increasing centrifugal tendencies in the 15th century.

A stable alliance with the church feudal lords also became essential for the royal government because the development of feudal relations in Ethiopia by the 15th century had increased the centrifugal forces in the political life of the country. Whereas previously it was only the rulers of the local dynasties who dared to challenge the power of the king, this challenge was now coming from the new feudal nobility that had grown out of the upper ranks of the military and the courtiers and who were already firmly entrenched on their own domains most of which were organized after the model of the royal domain. Not that it took the form so much of an increase in feudal discord as active intervention on the part of the nobility in matters relating to the succession to the throne—a circumstance which seriously undermined the power of the royal government. At that time the ancient clan tradition of the succession passing from the elder brother to the younger (a tradition that can be traced back to the Zagwe kings) had been virtually ousted by the tradition of passing the throne from father to son by right of primogeniture. This new tradition was not only strengthened by the authority of the Bible, but accorded far more with the growing ambitions of the kings and the solemnly proclaimed (though far from practised) principle of the autocracy of the Ethiopian monarchs.

Here, however, we note a curious circumstance. A monarch who had reigned for a fairly long time and managed to consolidate his power in the state would normally be succeeded by his eldest son. But the short-lived reigns of the 15th century inevitably resulted in struggles for power, the outcome of which was unforeseeable. Thus the new tradition was only able to assert itself when the Ethiopian kings were able to enforce it. Otherwise conflicts would break out in which the feudal nobility would inevitably take sides, which threatened stability and peace within the kingdom and consequently the power of the Ethiopian kings themselves.

Anti-feudal protest. Heretical movements.

As feudal relations became more extensively and deeply entrenched in Ethiopia (and consequently feudal exploitation in the numerous seigniories, both secular and ecclesiastical), the tide of anti-feudal protest swelled largely in the form of a number of heretical movements of a puritanical nature. These schismatics attacked the land-owning monasteries, demanding the strict observance of Apostolic precepts, particularly the vows of poverty and chastity. It is characteristic that the cradle of these heresies, which rapidly gained in popularity throughout the whole Christian kingdom, was the ancient province of Tigre where feudal relations were the most developed and long-standing. At first the royal government even sympathized with the idea of monastic poverty and acquisition of no wealth, especially after the conflicts it had had with the land-owning monasteries in the 14th century. But very soon it became evident that the heretics who recognized no other authority than the Old Testament and the Apostolic precepts not only rejected the spiritual power of the metropolitan, but also the secular power of the king and thus took their "renunciation of the world" to its logical conclusion.

Thus the heresies represented a threat not only to the Church, but also to the power of the king. The former was threatened with a schism, the latter with the danger of separatism. But the attitude to these heretical movements on the part of the metropolitan and the king was quite different. The metropolitan immediately branded them as heretical and excommunicated their followers. The king, whose ultimate aim was autocracy, chose a more flexible approach.

King Zara Yacob (1434-1468) set out to make a special tour of Tigre and spent three years there finding out about the situation. He did much to bring about a reconciliation between the heretics and the Church, but it was a reconciliation that was based on his own terms. In relation to the heretics they amounted to the king forcing the metropolitan to recognize certain dogmas and rituals that were practised by the heretics on the basis of the Old Testament and the Apostolic precepts and making them generous grants of land. In return the heretics were obliged to renounce their demand for poverty and non-self-interest and recognize the spiritual power of the metropolitan and the secular power of the king. In other words, they were asked to re-

nounce precisely those ideas which expressed the anti-feudal protest of the working population and turned a religious sect into a popular movement. The leaders of the sect who were tired of persecution by the Church and obviously set more store by the dogmatic side of their movement than its social content, agreed to the king's offer. But to implement his programme and break the resistance of the metropolitan, King Zara Yacob was forced to take an unprecedented step. He called from Alexandria two metropolitans for Ethiopia simultaneously and presided himself at the Church Synod in 1450 at which the "reconciliation" took place.

As a result, the king not only prevented a split in the state but succeeded in undermining very seriously the political importance of the metropolitan in the country. Whereas previously the Church had frequently entered into altercations with the monarchy over the question of the primacy of spiritual power over secular power, and had in fact insisted on its independence from the royal power, now King Zara Yacob had decided this question in his own favour by presiding over the Synod and establishing his authority in pronouncing upon matters of a purely theological nature. At the Synod the king had acted as peacemaker, but he took a completely different line with those sectarians who would not agree with the decision of the elders and refused to betray the social ideals of their movement, particularly to give up their no-wealth acquisition ideas. These were destroyed in a series of public trials and executions that were held throughout the country.

The reforms of King Zara Yacob. Having done away with the heretics and proved himself victorious over the rebellious Muslim leader, Adal Ahmad Badlay, Zara Yacob took another major step by setting up his capital at Debra Berhan. Like all his predecessors before him, Zara Yacob had continually travelled round the country at the head of his troops, sometimes remaining for lengthy periods at a time in one place—as had been the case in Tigre—but never settling permanently. Now for the first time since the fall of the Aksum Kingdom a capital was founded from where the king would rule his kingdom. This striking change in his way of life was brought about by the consideration he gave to radically changing both his state and its system of government. Whereas his predecessors

had looked upon the court rather as a military camp where the courtiers were either commanders of the king's troops or personal servants of the king or the clergy of his tent church, the new court was comprised mainly of civil servants selected by the king from among the clergy.

This selection of clerics as civil servants was quite natural if only for the reason that they were the only people who could read, write and count. But his choice was not restricted to these reasons. He decided to end once and for all the conflicts between the Church and the monarchy, which had gone on throughout the whole of the 14th century, and put the Church with its well-organised hierarchy and its well-trained bureaucracy at the service of the state.

Having thus organized a fairly numerous and efficient government apparatus, Zara Yacob then set about making a number of changes to the state which were the ultimate aim of his reforms. He removed the hereditary nobility completely from government and divided the country into regions each controlled by a governor who was personally responsible to the king. Thus court officials now ruled in place of the local vassals, but it soon became evident that this bold experiment was doomed to failure.

First there were insufficient officials on whom he could rely completely to fulfil this grandiose task and so he decided to keep the government of the country within his own family. But fearing even so that he might lose his grip on the reins of power, he took the characteristic precaution of giving his numerous daughters and nieces control of the regions rather than his sons and nephews. But these women were not always able to rule by themselves and in many cases entrusted their responsibilities to governors of their own choice. These in their turn, having no close, long-established links with the local population (as had the tribal nobility) no habitual feeling of the responsibility of professional officials, simply plundered the population under their control. The result was widespread discontent with whole provinces openly revolting against the power of the king and some, which had recently been converted to Christianity, renouncing that religion.

The king had to remove his daughters and nieces and appoint his own governors who would try and come to terms with the local population. But here the autocratic power of Zara Yacob faced another

danger. These new governors who were sent out to far-flung and economically almost autonomous provinces once again began to feel themselves freed and virtually independent of the central authorities.

The need to crush popular uprisings and keep a firm control over the local governors was an obvious fact to the king. And each failure to do so increased Zara Yacob's annoyance and resulted in brutal repressions which only served to engender fear and uncertainty among those whose task it was to implement the king's policy. At court there was much discontent and informers were rife leading to a wave of new executions that even included members of the royal family itself. Like the majority of impatient reformer-kings who were in a hurry to implement reforms that were ahead of their time, Zara Yacob during the second half of his reign unleashed his fury at those of his own supporters who had stood behind him from the very beginning. Now these too were handed over to the executioners. He saw only one way to get his reforms implemented—brutality and repression. But for all the careful thought that had been expended on them and for all the consistency of their implementation, they lacked stability and this resulted in their ultimate failure. And the causes of this failure lay in the very feudal structure of Ethiopian society.

In Western Europe at the time feudalism was at the stage of dissolution and the kings with the support of the city burghers were beginning to form national states. In Ethiopia, on the other hand, the dissolution of feudalism was nowhere in sight and neither towns nor burghers really existed. Therefore, having undertaken the almost impossible task of building a national state the king remained alone in his continuous struggle with all the numerous vassals, both lay and spiritual, and with the feudal system as a whole. This historical isolation of the king in 15th-century Ethiopia was amazingly reflected in the personal isolation of Zara Yacob, who in his long and intense struggle for the radical restructuring of the whole state, found no understanding from anyone, even his own children, trusted no one and showed no one any mercy. Cruel and poisoned with frustration, he sat isolated in his capital like a man imprisoned as he gradually came to realize that his life's work was doomed to failure. Fifteenth-century Ethiopia was completely shut off from Europe and trade with the rest of the world by an effec-

tive Muslim barrier, which the Crusaders had vainly tried to break. This barrier which had forced Europe to seek a route other than the ancient one across the Red Sea to India, was what had stimulated the great geographical discoveries. But for Ethiopia the barrier meant several centuries of non-participation in world trade and effectively doomed the country to a long existence as an isolated "Christian island". This ultimately was what determined the development of Ethiopian society which for centuries was forced to move in a feudal closed circle.

Restoration of the former system of feudal government. When Zara Yacob's son, Ba'eda Maryam (1468-1478) ascended the throne after having suffered himself considerably during the reign of his father, the first thing he did was to punish all his father's informers and resolutely renounce the autocratic policy his father had pursued. King Ba'eda Maryam not only restored the former system of feudal government, but demonstratively abandoned his father's capital never to return there again. Like a thrifty estate owner he occupied himself with his own domain only allowing himself to be diverted when the incursions of his troublesome Muslim neighbours demanded his presence on the border. With the accession of Ba'eda Maryam feudal decentralization predominated. During his ten-year reign the consequences of this were not particularly noticeable, but after the sudden death of his son, King Alexander, who was accidentally killed by a poisoned arrow, the feudal nobility once more took active interest in the question of the royal succession. Again there was bitter conflict between the different court factions, each of which had its own candidate for the throne chosen from among the young princes. The victory of such a candidate in the struggle meant power for his party and complete freedom to do whatever they liked.

It is characteristic that in this struggle the decisive role no longer belonged to the royal court or the Church, but to the army commanders who were stationed along the Muslim border and whose numbers were continually increasing as the danger of Muslim incursions increased. This happened at the very time when the Christian kingdom was beginning to lose its unity and military power.

The military threat. Ethiopia and Adal. It was at this time that the threat of invasion from

Ethiopia's Muslim neighbours grew due to a number of causes. Many of these Islamic neighbours were city-states that lived off the caravan trade with the coast. Despite the burden of taxes imposed by the Ethiopian kings the merchants in these city-states wanted peace with Ethiopia as an essential condition of trade. Red Sea trade flourished and its importance grew during the second half of the 14th century after Tamerlane in far-off Asia had cut off the Great Silk Route between East and West and the impossibility of overland trade increased the importance of sea trade. But this situation had sharply changed by the early 16th century due to the attempt to monopolize sea trade with India on the part of two powerful militant states, Portugal and the Ottoman Empire. Both states, however, had different approaches to the achievement of their single aim. In 1517 the Ottomans seized Egypt and the Turkish fleet entered the Red Sea. But the Portuguese had anticipated the Turks. In 1497 Vasco da Gama sailed round the Cape of Good Hope and reached India and in 1509 the Portuguese destroyed a Muslim fleet in a battle at Diu by the north-west coast of India and blockaded the entrance to the Red Sea.

This severely damaged Red Sea trade and undermined the political stability of Adal, the largest Muslim trading state on the Horn of Africa. The decline of trade had a disastrous effect on the economy of Adal and weakened the political influence of the wealthy merchants and Adal "sultans" among the impoverished townsmen who had yielded to the fanatic adherents of a "holy war" against the Christians and had readily joined the "fighters for the faith". The decline in trade also weakened the economic influence which the urban merchants had enjoyed among the nomads who had always supported Adal in its conflicts with Christian Ethiopia.

At this time a great migration of nomads from East Africa reached the Horn of Africa and wave upon wave of Galla tribesmen slowly but surely pushed the Somali and Afari tribes from their traditional place of wandering. As a result, the Somali and Afari tribes were forced to fight for new pastures which made them increasingly bellicose. Undisciplined and warlike they were ready to follow any leader who promised them new lands and booty. In these circumstances it is hardly surprising that the number of such leaders (emirs) grew and that they

were little inclined to pay attention to the sultans—the traditional rulers of Adal—who had lost their authority, economic influence and military power. Thus in the early 16th century it was those who advocated the waging of a “holy war” against Christian Ethiopia that gained the upper hand over the supporters of trade and peace.

In Ethiopia itself the beginning of the 16th century was marked by the further development of feudal relations and, as a natural consequence, the growth of feudal fragmentation and centrifugal forces. Many feudal lords and military commanders, particularly in the border provinces, betrayed their king with unprecedented ease and went over to Islam. This occurred on such a wide scale that the king could not punish these apostates and was forced to pardon them whenever they fell into his hands so that others should not be prevented from returning to the fold.

But it was not only the Ethiopian nobility, many of whom were now tied to the Muslim nobility through ties of kinship, who showed astonishing indifference to matters of religion. The ordinary people too were prepared to change their religion as they changed their masters. The explanation for this astonishing situation must evidently be sought in the fact that the eradication of heresies and popular religious movements in the 15th century gave rise to religious disillusionment among the people that at times reached the level of total apathy. Thus in the early 16th century the power of the king in Ethiopia meeting no open resistance, increasingly lost support both among the feudal lords and the ordinary people.

Once Adal had grown sufficiently aggressive and Ethiopia sufficiently weak as to be unable to resist it, the latter's fate was sealed. This came about in the 1520s when the bellicose Imam Ahmad ibn Ibrahim al-Ghazi, nicknamed Ahmad the Left-Handed by the Ethiopians, came to power. It seemed that the Christian monarchy perished with its last king and that the ambitions of the bellicose Imam Ahmad came close to fulfilment.

Resistance to the Muslim invasion. It was Imam Ahmad's desire to create in the place of a Christian kingdom an ideal Muslim theocratic state, and for this purpose he had begun his “holy war”. But he too ran into difficulties which in the final analysis proved insurmountable. There was not

only the fact that the newly converted Muslims were extremely unreliable. There was the far more important lack of any administrative apparatus, apart from the troops headed by his emirs, for running the state. The emirs carried out the orders of the imam and sent him the required amount of booty, but they proved completely incapable of governing and only robbed the local population, killing mercilessly or selling them into slavery.

It was at this time that the long-awaited help came from Portugal. On July 9, 1541, a contingent consisting of 400 Portuguese soldiers and 130 servants and slaves set out from the coast under the leadership of Don Christopher da Gama, the son of the famous explorer, for the interior of the country. Here the only remaining son of the late King Lebna Dengel, Claudius, had gathered round him a small group of soldiers and was trying to show them in small skirmishes that the terrible Muslims were far from invincible. Meanwhile the situation in the country was gradually changing. Those people who at the beginning of the Muslim invasion had deserted the field of battle *en masse*, because they did not know what they were fighting for, were now only too well aware of the horrors of the *djihad* and were ready to take up weapons knowing what they were doing.

The imam, on the other hand, paid scant attention at the time to the embryonic resistance of the local population. But the southward march of the Portuguese was a different matter. And for good reason. The Portuguese at the time had conquered half the world and had not the slightest fear of the Moors, as they called the Muslims, trusting completely in the strength of their weapons. Temperamental and unrestrained in peacetime, they proved cool and disciplined warriors in battle, which assured them success even in the most desperate of situations. When on April 4, 1542, 400 Portuguese met the imam's army of 15,00 infantry, 1,500 cavalry and 200 Turkish musketeers they not only held their ground, but wounded Imam Ahmad himself which brought about his army's retreat. The small group of Portuguese crusaders were, however, finally beaten by the Muslims and the severely wounded Don Christopher was captured. There he was put to excruciating and prolonged tortures, until the imam roused to a fury by the quiet, biting answers of his prisoner, ordered him to be beheaded.

But the imam's victory could not stop the anti-Muslim resistance which had spread throughout the country. It increasingly took on the character of a people's war and for this reason the *djihad* was never successful in the Horn of Africa.

The historical collapse of the *djihad*, however, was far from evident even in 1543, when the Muslims were defeated decisively in battle, but far from exhausted completely. At the same time nomadic tribes, who called themselves Oromo, but whom the Christians and Muslims called Galla, moved into the Horn of Africa from the south-west. Thus Ethiopia had hardly rid itself of the *djihad*, when a new danger threatened its borders. Waves of Oromo tribesmen swept in from the west and the south, while in March 1557 the Turks landed on the coast of the Red Sea and began to march into the interior. The following year they took the ancient monastery of Debra Damo and slaughtered all the monks there. In the east at Harare a new "emir of the faithful", Nur ibn Mudjahid, advanced on the country with dreams of restoring the former might of Adal.

At this time the power of the king in Ethiopia had considerably consolidated, for the people looked to the monarch as their only saviour from the destruction of foreign invasion. King Claudius tried to strengthen his alliance with the Church, which had also suffered enormously from the Muslim invasions and tried like Zara Yacob to form his own permanent capital-city. But most of the time he was forced to spend on the troublesome borders warding off attacks from the Oromo tribes and he rarely stayed in his capital. Furthermore, this city was situated close to the lands of the bellicose Nur, a fact which the latter tried to exploit in March 1559 by making a sudden attack on the king.

On March 23, 1559, King Claudius was killed in battle together with almost all the remaining Portuguese who had come with Christopher da Gama and almost all the courtiers and Church hierarchy who as true vassals had followed their king into battle. This was a double blow to the Ethiopian monarchy. In one day it suffered the loss not only of one of its most outstanding kings who did much to restore the Ethiopian state, but almost the whole of its small military and religious administrative apparatus, which the king had so carefully selected.

The last centuries of feudalism in Ethiopia.

After the death of Claudius his brother, Minas, ascended the throne after having been redeemed from Muslim bondage. But his short reign (1559-1563) saw an increase in feudal discord and rebellion. The Muslim invasion was just a bloody interlude in Ethiopian history. It did nothing to change its course nor solve any of the problems caused by the feudal character of Ethiopian society. Nevertheless, this external danger held up for a short time the spread of centrifugal forces in the country and thus contributed to strengthening the power of the king. Minas was killed in a campaign against one of his rebellious vassals, but his son, Sarsa Dengel (1563-1597), succeeded not only in establishing his own supreme power as a result of a bitterly fought war, but in winning back all the former territories of the Ethiopian kingdom and defeating the Turks who had established themselves on the Red Sea coast. With this the reconquest of the country was ended.

Once again the political life of Ethiopia began to develop under the influence of the old conflict between centripetal and centrifugal forces, which was so characteristic of the development of feudal society in general.

This struggle continued right up until 1942, when the last Ethiopian emperor, Haile Selassie I, succeeded in finally ending the political influence of the Ethiopian feudal lords and firmly establishing his own absolute power in the country. But though the feudal monarchy in Ethiopia had lasted for one thousand years, the absolute monarchy lasted for an incomparably shorter period. Its end came with the Ethiopian revolution in 1974. By an irony of fate, which is not extremely rare in history, the first and last Ethiopian absolute monarch was deposed by the same royal army that had been so carefully nurtured by the crown to crush the resistance from the feudal barons. But in 1974, though royal in name, this army was national in spirit and turned its weapons not only against the vestiges of feudalism in the country, but also against absolutism as such. Though feudalism had lasted for too long a time in Ethiopia, absolutism appeared too late. As a result these age-old opponents became equally unacceptable for the further development of the country and were swept away together by the national-democratic revolution.

Chapter VII

Feudalism in America

The two discoveries of America. The American continent was discovered twice. The first discovery occurred about 40,000-30,000 B. C. when a group of Mongolic peoples, very likely in pursuit of wild animals, crossed the overland corridor that existed during the Ice Age where the Bering Strait now lie.

The second discovery took place on October 12, 1492, when Christopher Columbus landed on an island in the Bahamas, which he called San Salvador. The central characters in these discoveries did not understand their importance. The Mongolic hunters obviously could not know that they had come to another hemisphere, while Columbus believed that he had reached India. In the history of America there were no events more momentous, for they began the two basic migrations to the New World.

The culture of the first discoverers was Late Palaeolithic. They used stone implements, could make fire and build mud huts, wore furs, sailed in dug-outs or hide-covered boats, carried spears, probably knew about bows and arrows, spun cloth, weaved bags and baskets, and kept dogs. On the basis of this culture the future Americans began their movement south and east, inhabiting an area of 42 million square kilometres.

The variety of natural and economic conditions, the different ability of the various tribes to adapt themselves to them and the enormous variation in inter-tribal relations and inter-tribal influences had produced by the time of the second discovery a visible difference in the level of productive forces among the native inhabitants and a motley picture

of distinctive economies and cultures. The region of the highest cultures ran from the middle of Mexico in the north to the River Maule (Chile) in the south. In the west it included Yucatan, the basins of the rivers Magdalena and Cauca (Colombia), Bolivia and the cis-Andes parts of Argentina. It was inhabited by tribes of several linguistic groups—Uto-Aztecan and Mayan in the north; Chibcha, Quechua and Aymara in the south. The peoples were farmers, growing beans, pumpkins, peppers, sun-flowers, cocoa, agave, tobacco, cotton and potatoes. But their ways of farming were different. The Mayans used primitive cutting and burning woods. The Aztecs' farming was based on artificial irrigation, and the Quechua had a terraced system. Though the Mayans remained basically in the Stone Age, other tribes by the first centuries A. D. knew basic metallurgy, worked gold, silver, copper, tin and lead and could make bronze and *tumbaga* (an alloy of gold and copper). They were skilful weavers, potters, stone-masons and builders. The development of crafts and trade had resulted in the building of towns and cities, whose architecture excites admiration even today. They built magnificent homes, palaces, temples, fortresses, stadiums and observatories. The Mayans could calculate the length of the solar year accurately within a minute, they could determine the times of solar eclipses and they knew the time of the orbits of the Moon and the planets. The Aztecs made extensive use of the medicinal properties of plants like the cinchona tree and they used anaesthetics in surgical operations,

while the Incas could even perform trepanation of the skull. There still remain examples of Mayan hieroglyphic texts, the oldest of which date from the 4th century A. D., Aztec pictographic manuscripts, like a treatise on the education of children, sacred calendars and historical chronicles, and a few remains of the Incan *quipu* (knot writing). We also know of a number of remarkable dramatic works like the Incan *Apu-Ollantay* and the Mayan *Rabinah Achi*.

The creators of these civilizations went through a process of grandiose historical change from a primitive communal society to one based on slave-owning. Tribal and class contradictions weakened the early American civilizations. By the time the first Europeans set foot in the New World, the native inhabitants were undergoing an acute crisis. From the mid-15th century continuous internecine wars were being fought between the Yucatan city-states of Mani, Sotuta, Izmil and others. The Aztec ruler, Montezuma II (1503-1520) tried hopelessly to keep the numerous smaller tribes in a state of subjugation and stop the break-up of his empire. The Incan "empire" of Tahuantinsuyo, which was being gradually undermined by the continual revolts of its subject tribes, was shaken in 1530 by a war between those who sided with the Sapa Inca ("Only Inca"), Huascar, and those who supported his step-brother, Atahualpa, which lasted until 1532.

East of these civilizations the Indians knew no clear-cut property stratification and no political passions. On the immense land mass that formed the rest of the two American continents the primitive communal society was everywhere dominant. Algonkins and Athapascans in Alaska and Canada; Sioux, Shoshones and Kedo in the North American plains; Arawaks, Caribans and Tupi-Guaraní in the Orinoco and Amazon basins, in the upper reaches of the River Paraguay basin and on the Brazilian plateau; and Araucans, Guaykuru, Puelche and Chono in Argentina and southern Chile all lived in this same type of society.

Obviously it can be maintained that the first discovery of America was not the first visit by a group of nameless Mongolic hunters, but a process which took tens of thousands of years and that was interrupted by the second discovery. The landing of Columbus and his followers was only the beginning of

a complex process of unification of the Western and the Eastern hemispheres which until that time had been separated. But this process was incomparably quicker than the first. Pre-Columbian America had a history stretching back for thousands of years; the history of colonial America is measured in hundreds.

No less was the difference in the intensiveness with which the disintegration of the primitive communal society took place in America and with which feudalism disintegrated in Europe where at the end of the 15th century money was already undermining and eroding the feudal system from within.

The Spanish and the Portuguese were the pioneers of the second discovery of America. It was on the Iberian Peninsula that a social system developed whose economic situation forced it to look across the seas. One of the most important signs of feudal crisis on this peninsula was the far-reaching process of fragmentation among the landed estates of the local nobility, which resulted in them getting smaller and feudal rent diminishing. The impoverished hidalgos saw an opportunity to improve their lot in military expeditions overseas and in an unrestrained quest for gold which had become the generally accepted measure of wealth. Psychologically they were ready for the conquest of the New World: first, because during the years of the reconquest war had been the basic occupation for generation after generation of Spanish and Portuguese; secondly, because the Catholic Church believed that the seizure of lands from the pagan Indians was as legitimate and just a cause as driving the Arabs from the peninsula. But if the lands overseas had attracted only the conquistadors, it is unlikely that they would have been discovered and conquered. It was rather the governments of both Iberian kingdoms together with their new bourgeois of trading towns, the feudal nobility, the Catholic Church and monastic orders that placed their hopes for enrichment on the colonization of the New World.

The Spanish colonization went ahead rapidly. It saw Vasco Núñez de Balboa raise the flag of Castille on the banks of the Darién, Cortes in Mexico and Pizarro in Peru. Having begun under circumstances that were extremely favourable to Spain both internally and externally, the Spanish colonization of America gained powerful stimulation in the process

of development. The conquistadors discovered more and more lands that were rich in gold as they moved away from the Atlantic coastline towards the higher civilizations of the west, where feudal relations found the most favourable opportunities for adaptation in the New World.

In 1493 Spain's base for colonial expansion was Haiti. In 1508 Puerto-Rico was taken over and the following year, Jamaica. The years 1511-1513 saw the subjugation of Cuba. The first landings in Panama were made also in 1511 and two years later the Spanish had crossed the "wasps' waist of the continent" and reached the Pacific Ocean. From 1523 to 1527 partially relying on their base in Panama and exploiting their success in the Mexican expedition, they conquered Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala. The Spanish first learned of Aztec gold in 1518 and of Incan gold in 1527. Meanwhile the empire of Montezuma II had fallen in 1521 and that of Tahuantinsuyo in 1533. In 1527 the first Spanish settlement appeared on La Plata. In the 1530s the conquerors stepped up their penetration from the Atlantic coast, in the 40s from Peru and in the 50s from Chile. Having established themselves in the 1520s on the Caribbean coast of South America, the Spanish penetrated the central regions of Colombia between 1536 and 1539 and put an end to the territorial and political formations of the Muisca. It is true that the seizure of the interiors of the regions colonized by Spain sometimes lasted decades and even centuries. This was due to the particularly stubborn resistance of the Indians (the Mayans, the Pueblo and the Araucans), the inaccessibility of a particular region or to the fact that gold was not expected to be found there.

Spain not only occupied enormous areas of land in America during the 16th century, but established colonial domination of them. In the course of more than three centuries she lost only a few islands in the West Indies and a few small regions in Central America. In 1763 she increased her dominions with the vast territory of western Louisiana which she retained until 1800. By the beginning of the 19th century there were Spanish viceroys in New Spain, New Grenada, Peru and Rio de La Plata and captain-generals in Guatemala, Cuba, Venezuela and Chile.

Portugal's colonization of South America was far slower. She had begun colonial expansion eight

decades earlier. By the time of the accidental discovery of Brazil in 1500 Portugal had trading posts and forts in many parts of Africa and Asia. The need to hold on to their possession in other parts of the world, the limited amount of manpower at their disposal and the belief that there was no gold in Brazil delayed the Portuguese colonization of America for more than thirty years. The founding of *capitanias* in Brazil began only in 1534. These were hereditary feudal domains stretching along the Atlantic coast and given to *donatarios* who were chosen from among the nobility.

But from the 1540s onwards the colony was put under the direct control of the Portuguese king. From 1581 to 1640 Portugal was part of the Spanish monarchy and from 1630 to 1654 both Portuguese colonists and the monarchy fought against the Dutch who had seized large areas of north-east Brazil. This could not but hold up the process of colonization. An important role in gaining control of the interior of Brazil was played in the 16th and 17th centuries by the *bandeiras*—expeditions of Indian-hunters and seekers after precious metals—as well as Jesuit missionaries. The discovery in the late 17th and the early 18th centuries of rich gold and diamond deposits gave a powerful impetus to colonization. Many parts of the Brazilian plateau and the Amazon, however, remained inaccessible to the Portuguese even as late as the early 19th century.

While the Spanish and Portuguese colonization of America was chiefly conducted at the command of the king and the state, and emigration to America was chiefly from among the nobles, French, Dutch and British colonization was in the main conducted by the private companies, religious societies and individual entrepreneurs, and immigrants came from all classes. French colonies appeared in the basin of the St. Lawrence, in Florida and in Brazil during the 16th century, while Holland and Britain looked to the New World as an arena for expansion only in the 17th century.

The rivalry between the French, Dutch and British colonialists resulted in the mid-18th century in the clear predominance of England. Neither Holland with its commerce and industry, nor France with its peasants-censitarios that were tied to the land could provide as many immigrants for the New World as England. The enclosure system which resulted in the English peasantry being deprived of

land, the impoverishment of the small craftsmen who were unable to adapt to the capitalist restructuring of the country's economy, the persecution of the Puritans and the subsequent civil war which accompanied the bourgeois revolution in the mid-17th century all combined to produce mass emigration to the Western Hemisphere. Between 1607 and 1770, 13 colonies reaching from the Atlantic coast to the Allegheny Mountains were founded by emigrants from England. In 1664 the English took New Holland, which had been founded by the Dutch in 1616, and in 1763 they became masters of New France, founded in 1608, and the eastern part of Louisiana which had belonged to France since 1682. British colonies were set up in Guiana, the Mosquito Coast in eastern Nicaragua, Belize in south-eastern Yucatan, Jamaica, the majority of the Lesser Antilles, the Bahamas, the Bermudas and Trinidad and Tobago. By the end of the 18th century all France retained was part of Guiana and the islands of San-Domingo (Haiti), Guadeloupe and Martinique, while Holland was left with Surinam and the islands of Curaçao, Aruba and Bonaire.

In the late 17th and during the 18th centuries two other countries formed colonies in the New World: St. Thomas, St. John and Santa Cruz in the Virgin Islands were colonized by Denmark, and Russia set up several settlements in Alaska and California.

European colonization had different consequences for the two unequal "halves" of indigenous America: the region of higher civilizations with their early class state formations and the world of the primitive commune. All along the Pacific coast on a line running from Mexico through Bogota to Lima colonial feudalism flourished. This system which was an amalgam of elements taken from the social organization of the Indian states and the feudal system in the Iberian Peninsula became the main support of Spanish domination in America. Through its connections with the pre-Columbian past this system protected the indigenous population from complete annihilation, but it put an end to any kind of independent development. The labour of the rank and file members of the commune, which lay at the base of the flourishing Aztec state and the Tahuantinsuyo empire, was also a guarantee of colonial feudalism.

For the world of the primitive commune the

second discovery of America had catastrophic consequences. At a time when the productive forces of the primitive Indian tribes possessed unlimited opportunities for growth and improvement, the course of their development was cut short. The relations of production imported by the colonialists in no way corresponded to the material conditions of existence in which these Indians lived. The monstrous brutalities that were practised on these peoples in an attempt to turn what in effect was a neolithic civilization into slaves or, to be more precise, to make the exploitation of these slaves economically feasible, were nowhere successful. The Indians either died or retreated to the central regions of the continent that were virtually inaccessible to Europeans.

Thus the Indians in the region of higher civilization were saved by the relatively high level of productive forces and social structure, whereas those who lived as primitive hunters, fishers and farmers were protected, at least for a time, by the boundless expanses of the continent. Those who were not able to hide were doomed during the first years of colonization.

On the continent a border immediately formed between the world of the colonialists along the coast and the world of the free tribes in the interior. This border which stretched for thousands and thousands of kilometres was gradually pushed further and further west, but it was pushed relatively slowly, and the Indian world was compelled to transform considerably under the impact of colonization.

During the 17th and 18th centuries the offensive against the Indians was stepped up.

The colonialists took enormous areas of land from the Indians. Arguments to the effect that the Europeans often occupied empty spaces are simply not true for the reason that such empty spaces were virtually non-existent. The population of America on the eve of the conquest has been variously estimated at between 40 and 100 million and the mode of production among the Indian tribes required vast areas of land for each individual member.

In the regions that were suitable for growing sugar cane, tobacco, cotton, and coffee the colonialists ran enormous plantations based on large-scale feudal land ownership and worked by slaves. In Brazil, the southern parts of North America, Guiana, the West Indies and the Caribbean coast of

Venezuela and Colombia plantation slavery, which was closely linked with the world markets and which ultimately became the point of departure for the subsequent development of capitalist relations, formed the basis of economic life.

During the process of colonization the north of what is today the United States and eastern Canada became an area of conflict between the feudal relations that had been firmly implanted by the governments of England and France and elements of the capitalist formation that was rapidly gaining ground in Europe. A specific type of feudalism developed here which may be called European-North American feudalism. To understand its specifics a number of circumstances must be taken into account. First, European types of feudal institutions were imposed on the territories. There were feudal holdings (manors, freeholds and copyholds) and fixed rent in the British colonies, and a seigniorial system with its payments and obligations in French Canada as well as primogeniture and others. Secondly, the metropolises saw the birth and development of capitalist relations, which ultimately led to a breakdown in the feudal structure, to bourgeois revolutions and to the comparatively early end of the feudal formation. Thirdly, there were a number of factors contributing to the transformation of those European feudal institutions which characterized the whole of North America. These included: the peculiar position of the free white farming community, which in relation to the feudal landowners were the objects of exploitation, but in relation to the indigenous Indian population were themselves the exploiters and conquerors (the colonists armed against Indians were a powerful anti-feudal force); the availability of boundless areas of Indian land in the west which encouraged such practices as squatters' rights; and finally the influence of natural conditions on economic life (the enormous forests, for example, which produced an abundance of fur-bearing animals and led to the extensive development of the fur-trade).

Colonial feudalism, plantation slavery and European-North American feudalism were the most important results of the second discovery of America

The formation of the colonial feudal system. The colonial feudal system in America began its existence on the Island of Hispaniola (Haiti)

during the 1490s and early 16th century. The mining of gold, the running of the cotton and tobacco plantations, the production of food and the transportation of goods all required a workforce. These economic facts decided the fate of the 100,000 Tainos living on the island. They were all enslaved. The Taino-slaves were the source of wealth, for without them the land would have had no value and the very existence of the Spanish on the island would have been impossible.

But the fate meted out to the Tainos was quite unlike that of the serfs in medieval Europe. The medieval European serf enjoyed a number of rights denied to the slaves of antiquity. He had the right of inviolability of person, he could have a family and even marry a free woman. The Tainos were considered "natural slaves" as distinct from "legal slaves", the latter term referring to those who had been sold into slavery or taken prisoner, the former to those who had supposedly little intellect or moral fibre.

In 1495 land and Indian slaves were first distributed among the Spanish colonists (*repartimiento*, or repartition). But this proved to be a cause of great concern to the Madrid government, for it feared that the opportunity to dispose of the Indians as they saw fit would only increase the independence of the colonists from the crown. In 1497 Isabella and Ferdinand gave Columbus the right to dispose of the land on Hispaniola, but not the Indians. However, a colonialist uprising in 1499 forced Columbus to give official consent to *repartimiento*.

The serious conflict that had broken out among the colonists over the Indian workforce and the continual reduction in the number of Indians available as a result of their high mortality under conditions of atrociously inhuman exploitation encouraged the authorities in Madrid in 1500 to formally renounce the view of the Indians as "natural slaves". They were declared subjects of the crown and the administration of the island was instructed to effect their conversion to Christianity. This made it possible to exact from the new subjects a capitulation tax, collect church tithes, exploit them in the state mines and plantations while supposedly protecting them from greedy colonialists.

Indians who refused to submit were not given the "protection" of the crown and the colonists could treat them as "legal slaves". Thus slavery became

the punishment for refusal to work. In March 1503 the depopulation of large areas of the island resulted in a direction to forcibly settle the Indian population near to the gold mines so as to make the exploitation of their labour easier.

But the measures taken by Madrid found no support among the colonists, who were reluctant to concede the Indians to the state. The Spanish government therefore made a compromise, which had enormous importance for the subsequent colonization of America. On December 20, 1503, Isabella signed two orders addressed to the governor of Hispaniola, Nicolas de Ovando. The Indians who were declared subjects of the crown were given to the colonists on long-term or short-term grants. The colonist who thus received a tract of land together with its Indian inhabitants had the right to exploit the Indians and was required to pay the crown a quarter of his income. This grant became known as *encomienda* ("charge", "commission", "recommendation"). The Indians were now tied to certain areas and not allowed to leave them, being forced to work on the lands of their "guardians". The latter did not own the land belonging to his "wards". Indian land and colonial land was formally separated. The right to enjoy the fruits of the Indians' labour implied concern on the part of the *encomendero* for their souls.

The extensive distribution of *encomiendas* was answered by the Indians in 1504 with an uprising. Punitive expeditions led to the mass annihilation of the Indians or their enslavement. In 1508 a special decree was issued allowing the exploitation of Indian slaves, and from 1509 legislation on *encomienda* was developed with particular intensiveness. A notable stage in the latter was the publication in 1512 and 1513 of the Laws of Burgos, according to which the Indians had to work 9 months a year for the *encomendero*. They were forbidden to change their patron, who was obliged to provide the food and clothing of his "wards" and not subject them to corporal punishment. A single colonist could not be "entrusted" with more than 150 Indians.

In 1514 the authorities in Hispaniola conducted the last major distribution of the Indians. By this time their number had been reduced to 30,000 of which the number of aboriginal Tainos was even fewer due to the practice of importing Indian

slaves from the Lesser Antilles. By the 1520s most of the work on the island was done by black slaves and by 1570 there were no more than 500 Indians.

An analogous fate was meted out to the Indians in Cuba. In 1492 there were more than 100,000 of them; by 1532 this number had been reduced to 5,000. In Jamaica the story was the same with many thousands of Indians being destroyed. Even in Brazil where the natives had an enormous territory into which to retreat, their numbers were reduced from 1-4 million in the early 16th century to 200-500 thousand by the end of the 19th century. The Tupinamba, the Omagua and a number of the other more developed Indian tribes were almost destroyed entirely. They had been settled along the coast in places that were more easily accessible to the Portuguese. Slave hunts were almost always successful, because the density of the population here was relatively high. Furthermore, these slaves could then be put to work very profitably on the nearby plantations.

The disintegrating primitive communal society along the Atlantic coastline could not provide a favourable environment for the development of the productive forces of colonial feudalism. But in the process of the destruction of the Indian societies on the Antilles and the eastern coast of South America new relations of production that were unique to colonial feudalism began to develop, particularly those methods of exploiting the indigenous population that were widely used by the colonialists in the regions of higher civilization.

Colonial feudalism began to be established in this region during the 1520s and 30s. And it was far from being a peaceful establishment, accompanied as it was by enormous destruction and desolation of the productive forces in Indian society.

During the first decades of the conquest the Spanish were very little interested in the economic development of the colonies. These first invaders were soldiers, who despised labour and looked only for gold, they were robbers, not entrepreneurs. It was only when the flood of gold from the tombs and the plundered sanctuaries, gold that had been taken from the Indians, dried up, that the invaders turned their attention to working the mines.

Engaged during the early period of the conquest in plundering gold, obtaining provisions and hunt-

ing for Indians, who were enslaved under any pretext (as servants, carriers, rowers, etc.) the conquistadors had no time for farming or otherwise exploiting the land. But the subsequent founding of colonies, the building of fortresses and towns and the continual mining of precious metals made economic exploitation essential. The conquistador commanders received as feudal holdings enormous possessions, but the crown which had smashed the power of the feudal owners in Spain itself, tried during the conquest and for decades afterwards to the end of the 16th century to limit the increase in the number of large holdings. The measures used for the holdings given to the Spanish colonists were relatively small: the *peonia*, which was approximately 40 hectares and the *caballeria*, approximately 200 hectares. An infantry soldier could be given up to five *peonias*, while a cavalry officer could receive up to three *caballerias*. Not infrequently the lands were seized by the soldiers themselves and the granting of the holdings became merely a formal registration of the seizure.

The problem of providing a workforce was solved on the continent in the same way as it had been on the islands, beginning with the handing out of *encomiendas*. Extremely concerned at the terrifying results of the *encomienda* in the West Indies and very reluctant to encourage independence among the colonists the government in Madrid was most unwilling to continue it and did so only in view of the inevitable distribution of Indians between the land holders. In 1522 Cortes gave out *encomiendas* in New Spain, in 1529 Pizarro was granted the same authority after his successful campaign in Peru. In 1539 the conqueror of New Grenada, Jiménez de Quesada, began handing out rights of guardianship over the Indians, and in 1544 Pedro de Valdivia, the conqueror of Chile, did the same.

In the region of higher civilization the *encomienda* system was undoubtedly used to a much greater extent than along the Atlantic coast. In Tahuantinsuyo the Indians worked the lands of the Sapa Inca and the lands of the Sun, which belonged to the priests, as well as their own individual plots, called *topu*. In the Aztec state the Indians worked areas of land that were set aside for the local leaders and priests, for the payment of tribute and taxes and for the waging of wars. There were also Mayeces—Indians from other tribes who were for

some reason or other outside the community. The Mayeces lived on the lands of the Aztec nobility and could be inherited along with that land. In the Muisca state the Indian nobility also lived on rent paid in kind and through the exploitation of members of the commune. The early slave-owning societies of ancient America with indistinctly expressed class structure thus had a number of individual elements of the feudal mode of production. Furthermore, the numerous subject tribes were everywhere exploited by the few privileged tribes.

At the base of the social and economic structure of the region of higher civilization lay the despotic power of the supreme rulers who had the right to dispose of the life and property of each individual Indian, and the commune which was a production, administrative, legal and taxation unit in Indian states. Madrid used the conquistadors to crush the power of the local rulers, but the commune as a whole and the local Indian *caciques* were retained. The commune land was divided into three parts. One of these was held by individual families and periodically underwent redistribution, another functioned as a communal pasture and the third was worked in common and its proceeds went to pay a capitation tribute. The Indian now had to work on the commune lands and lands of the *encomendero*, just as before the conquest he worked on his own *topu* as well as on the fields of the Sapa Inca and priests in Ancient Peru.

Having given the Indians to the *encomenderos*, the crown then published a series of decrees forbidding the seizure of Indian land (1523, 1532, 1535), enslaving the native population (1526, 1530, 1548), handing them out to hire, or giving them as loans (1529), using them on exhausting work and taking them outside the confines of the colony (1528). Fearing to lose his flock and the income it provided Pope Paul III issued a bull in 1537, forbidding enslavement of the Indians under pain of excommunication. This protectionist policy, of course, had nothing to do with humanitarianism. It was provoked entirely by the self-interest of the ruling class and was the embodiment of the struggle between the crown and the colonists over the Indian workforce. Madrid's protectionism, what is more, was contradictory in the extreme, for Indians who continued resistance or revolted were punished with enslavement. This can be seen from the decrees of

Charles V issued in 1526, 1528 and 1534, a decree of Philip II of 1569, and various instructions from viceroys controlling the administration of the colonies.

The vast amount of legislation that was published to control the *encomienda* shows two distinct tendencies. On the one hand, there were the insistent attempts of the crown to limit the power of the landowner—"guardians" over the Indians. The years from 1522 to 1531 had seen almost complete lack of control over the *encomenderos* in New Spain. But during the following three years one hundred colonists lost their *encomiendas* on the grounds that they had been received in contravention of the existing laws. The "New Laws" of Charles V, which were published in 1542 and supplemented in 1543, delivered an incomparably greater blow to the *encomienda* system. The Indians were declared free and direct subjects of the crown. The ban on enslavement and forced labour was stressed. The future granting of *encomiendas* was to stop. The right of guardianship was maintained only during the guardian's lifetime. *Encomiendas* belonging to the colonial administration, the clergy, the monasteries and persons whose right to guardianship was not endorsed in the appropriate documents were all annulled. All Indians "set free" in this way were immediately to pass over to the direct control of the crown.

The *encomenderos* were made tax-gatherers. These taxes had to be paid by men from the age of 18 to 50 (although frequently the guardians claimed taxes not only for children, but also for dead people) and the *encomenderos* could only collect them, not impose them. The duties of the *encomendero* were fairly broad. He was required to protect the Indians from third parties, convert them to Catholicism, pay the local priest a salary, build and keep up the churches in the Indian settlements and keep weapons and horses at the ready in the event of invasion. "Payment" for these services to the crown came from granting the *encomendero* the right to keep for himself three quarters of the taxes collected from the Indians. This he collected in kind and paid the state treasury in cash.

The "New Laws" drove the *encomenderos* to fury. In 1544 they demonstrated and at times these demonstrations led to bloodshed. The crown was then forced to make many concessions. But on the whole the tendency to legislate on the *encomienda* system

remained firm. In 1549 it was struck by a new blow: the *encomenderos* were no longer able to practise the uncontrolled exploitation of the Indians—they lost the right to exact *corvée*. In the following year an instruction from the viceroy of New Spain explained that if Indians were to be used for work in the fields, on building, in the home or on the transportation of loads, they should be paid, and the amount of work should not be excessive. A strict proviso for the crown's priority in utilizing the work of Indians was also made in Philip II's decree of 1561.

The second tendency in *encomienda* legislation was the granting of concessions to the colonists, although these were only concerned with the right to inherit *encomiendas*. In 1536 guardians were granted the right to bequeath *encomiendas* to widows and their children. In 1545 this right, which was previously abrogated by the "New Laws", once more came into force. The following year the same privilege was also restored for members of the colonial administration. In 1555 the rights of the *encomendero* were extended for the life of three generations, in 1607 for four and in 1629 for five (in Peru in the same year for three). Subsequently they became virtually hereditary.

But once the *encomenderos* had achieved success in the field of inheritance, they totally ignored any legislation limiting their own rights. The finest demonstration of this was the publication of a number of laws that were all of a similar nature, the complaints of the local administration against the colonists, the practice of imposing fines on the *encomenderos*. The crown was frequently unable to ensure that its laws were obeyed. This would have required as a very minimum regular inspections of the enormous and frequently inaccessible territories (to determine their natural and economic conditions and the density of their population, etc.) and effective supervision of the activities of the local administration.

But despite the resistance of the *encomenderos*, the *encomienda* as a form of non-economic coercion was doomed. In the 1540s and throughout subsequent decades the number of *encomiendas* began to be consistently reduced. In 1545 there were 577 *encomiendas* in New Spain. By 1560 this figure had been reduced to 318, and in 1602 to 140. In Peru there were 970 *encomiendas* in 1574; in 1591 there were only 695. In 1544, 60 *encomiendas* were granted in Chile and two years later only 32 of these

were left. From 1687 to 1695 and again from 1703 to 1705 the crown obliged guardians to hand over to the state treasury half the revenues they collected from taxation. In 1717 Philip V withdrew the right of granting *encomiendas* from even such highly-placed officials of the colonial administration as the viceroy and the presidents of *audiencias*, leaving these for himself alone. In the following year he issued a decree that all vacant *encomiendas* were to be returned to the crown. In 1720 the institution of the *encomienda* was officially abolished. From 1721 onwards tax was collected everywhere throughout the colonies by the royal *corregidores* (chief officers), who since 1565 had been collecting taxes on the royal *encomiendas*—*corregimientos*. Of course, the decree of 1720 did not put an end immediately to all the *encomiendas*. In various parts of the region of higher civilization and adjacent areas they were maintained almost to the end of the 18th century, but by that time their existence no longer determined the social and economic face of Spanish America.

The decline of the *encomiendas* is explained by a number of factors. As has been mentioned, the crown and the colonists waged a bitter struggle with each other over the Indian workforce with the aim of getting the lion's share of the feudal rent. Furthermore, the barbaric exploitation of the Indians had catastrophically reduced their numbers. If the indigenous population of Central Mexico had numbered 25 million before the conquest, by 1532 these had been reduced to 16.8 million and in 1568 to 2.6 million. The population of Peru on the eve of the conquest has been variously estimated at between 8 and 12 million, but by 1570 this had been reduced to 1.5 million. The rapid reduction in the size of the population of the regions of higher civilization, which ruined the *encomenderos* and damaged the interests of the crown, lent a particular fervour to their struggle for the right to dispose of the Indian workforce at will.

The armed resistance of the Indians also sapped the strength of the *encomienda* system. From 1522 to 1529 there were continual uprisings of Indians in New Spain. They took place again in 1531, 1534, 1538, 1541, 1544-1547 and 1571. The uprising in Peru under the leadership of Manco Inca, Sayri Túpac and Túpac Amaru lasted from 1536 to 1572. Everything Spanish aroused the implacable hatred

of the Indians. They destroyed not only the colonialists themselves, but the tools, utensils, furniture, etc., which they had brought with them, as well as their cattle, their churches, their settlements and their mines. It would be no exaggeration to claim that between 1520 and 1570 a desperate attempt was made at reconquest by the Indians, but an attempt that was drowned in their own and their enemies' blood.

But this was not the main reason for the withering away of the *encomienda* system. Being based on the integration of pre-Columbian feudal communities into the Spanish colonial feudal system, the *encomienda* was already beginning to hold up the development of colonial productive forces within a few decades of its official introduction. Backward and traditional ways characterized the agriculture of the indigenous community. Tools were primitive and barely any differentiation was made between farming and the crafts. Amid the colossal destruction wrought during the period of Spanish conquest and Indian reconquest the pre-Columbian commune and the *encomienda* that was based on it brought the economy of the colonies to the point of collapse. The country became depopulated and the treasury lay empty. The first period in the history of colonial feudalism, which began in the 1520s and was marked by the crown's policy of containing the growth of the large-scale estates, by maintaining the ancient commune, and keeping the *encomienda* system as the most important form of non-economic constraint, this period came to an end between 1560 and 1590 in the flames of the Indian reconquest.

The second period of colonial feudalism.

The new period of colonial feudalism was begun by measures taken to reconstruct the pre-Columbian commune. The decrees of the 1550s and 1560s, which severely restricted the Indians' rights of movement, served no further useful purpose. Most of the communes had become so depopulated that they could no longer pay their taxes in their former amounts, not to mention the difficulties involved in collecting them from hundreds of deserted villages. In these circumstances it was difficult to exploit Indian labour and so during the last third of the 16th century a policy for the planned resettlement of the indigenous population was implemented.

The position of the old Indian nobility gradually

changed, for the end of the pre-Columbian commune reduced its importance. This was a slow but inevitable process.

The Spanish authorities tried to make the Indian population solvent and resettle them in such a way as to facilitate their more effective exploitation. But many of the instructions that came from Madrid were never carried out in practice. From 1579 to 1663 numerous protectionist decrees continued to be issued limiting the claims of the colonists to be entitled to exploit and enslave the Indians. Nevertheless, enslavement still remained the legal penalty for revolt, as for example was the case with the Araucans in 1608-1674.

In the 1590s the crown began the opposite policy of noticeably encouraging the growth of the large-scale estates as part of the process of reconstructing the communes. As the Indians died out and the policy of resettlement took effect, enormous areas of land passed into the hands of the colonists, frequently without the sanction of the authorities. But estates increased not only through escheated lands. The latifundists frequently annexed land which the communes supposedly had no "real need" for, and lands bordering on regions where wild and hostile Indian tribes still lived. Unable to oppose this the crown tried to get compensation in the form of tax from the landowners. In 1591 Philip II published a decree on the collection of taxes from all the landed estates. The territory of what is present-day Colombia, for example, was divided into three categories—Indian (envisaged by the *resguardo* system), private, and state lands. This policy in Spanish agrarian legislation was also continued in 1631, when Philip IV issued a decree on the payment in a lump sum of a tax on land whose ownership had not been legally registered.

The growth of latifundism, of course, was due to reasons other than colonial expansion and the crown's interest in receiving fiscal compensation from the land seizures. The mutinees of the conquistadors who were discontented with the policies of the Spanish government in relation to the Indians, the fear occasioned by the Indian attempts at reconquest, the active presence in the New World of other powers and the increased political reaction in Spain itself meant that in the second half of the 16th century Madrid began to seek support among the colonial land-owning oligarchy.

The second period in the history of colonial feudalism was characterized by the predominance of *repartimiento*. This was a new form of non-economic coercion, a new type of feudal corvée. The term has been used previously in this book to refer to the distribution of Indians, land and goods, etc. Here, as a form of feudal rent, *repartimiento* meant the centralized, systematic distribution of the workforce among different exploiters that was carried out by the state throughout the whole region of colonial feudalism. *Repartimiento* had deep historical roots. In Peru and in Tahuantinsuyo it was called *mita*, in New Spain and under the Aztecs it was called *cuatequil*.

The rise of *repartimiento* was due to a sharp reduction in the size of the Indian population and a growth of the Spanish and Creole (the Creoles were the Spanish who were born in the colonies) populations. There were nowhere near enough *encomiendas*, the guardian no longer functioned as a spreader of Christianity, the distribution of the workforce had to be more mobile and flexible. Furthermore, *repartimiento* was brought about by the desire of the crown to be directly responsible for the Indian workforce. Finally, and this is the most important, *repartimiento* became necessary for increasing the productive forces of the colonies.

The decree on systematic *repartimiento*, i.e. the introduction of compulsory labour service, was issued in 1549, but the juridical and administrative norms for the system were only established later, in the mid-1570s. During the course of the following six decades the *mitayos* (statute labourers) who by law were supposed to receive a fixed recompense for their labour, were the basic workforce on the latifundias (the Indians who had once worked on *encomiendas* were not infrequently exploited here on the basis of the *mita*, since corvée was officially banned), in the mines, in the primitive textile manufacturing shops and on the construction sites. The conditions under which the *mitayos* lived and worked were extremely hard. In the famous silver mines at Potosí alone 8 million Indians died in a period of 150 years—there was an average of 53,000 per year, or almost 150 a day. In 1580 there were 1.9 million Indians in Central Mexico, in 1595 there were 1.3 million and by 1605 their numbers had been reduced to little over a million. After 1633 *repartimiento* was to all intents and purposes abandoned and continued to be used only in the mines.

The characteristic features of the second period in the history of colonial feudalism, which lasted from the 1590s to the 1660s, were the liquidation of the pre-Columbian communes, the beginning of state encouragement for large-scale landowning and the extensive spread of *repartimiento*. To these one other may be added: a noticeable weakening of the liberation struggle on the part of the indigenous population due to the disappearance of the ancient communes and the defeat of the Indian reconquest. Instead of the continuous wave of uprisings that had taken place during the previous period, there were now only individual outbreaks like the Cuachichile and Tepehuan uprisings that took place between 1624 and 1645. The predominance of *repartimiento* brought other types of more passive resistance to the fore like desertion, absenteeism, the provision of false information on workforce, non-fulfilment of norms, and requests and complaints made to the local administration. Unwilling to fulfil their labour duties the Indians moved from the communes to the estates where they became day-labourers and beyond the reach of the local *cacique*, *corregidor* or *encomendero*, for to effect the return of a runaway in, for example, Peru would take at least four years.

The third period in the history of colonial feudalism. The last period in the history of colonial feudalism, which began in the 1660s, was marked by the rapid growth of lay and clerical land-ownership. The large latifundia, which had been formed in various ways—mostly through conquest but also through grants, distributions, apportionments, leases, purchases and inheritances—grew with particular rapidity in the 18th century because of their increased output for the overseas market (which was a consequence of the reforms of Charles III during the 1660s and 1670s and the growth of contraband trade). The crown did not oppose this, but required payment of a land tax, which the latifundia owners resisted. When in 1735 it was decreed that the collection of taxes would come under the direct control of the *Consejo de las Indias* (the highest administrative organ for the colonies), they did not attempt to hide their dissatisfaction and demonstratively abandoned their estates, and took the upper hand. In 1754 Ferdinand VI not only revoked the law of 1735, but declared all lands acquired before 1700 to be “un-

conditional”, i. e. tax-free property. The latifundia continued to grow in subsequent years.

The traditional protectionist (in relation to the Indians) legislation of the mid-17th through mid-18th centuries contained almost no statutes protecting the land rights of the communes, though the enslavement of Indians (apart from those showing resistance to the government), the practice of *corvée* and the buying and selling of natives remained banned as before. And not without good reason. After the abolition of *repartimiento* in the 1630s a third important form of non-economic coercion gradually came to the fore—peonage. This colonial feudal form held complete sway in socio-economic relations until the mid-18th century.

The peon was a day-labourer who was given a loan (either in the form of money, land, cattle, accommodation, tools, seeds, food, or clothes, etc.) which he had to work off through bondage to his exploiter. The practice of granting loans was started in Spanish America in the mid-16th century. In 1553 a decree was published to the effect that Indian peons were to be paid for their labour the sum of half a real. The money was to be paid in advance as a loan which had to be worked off. In 1574 the viceroy of Peru, Francisco de Toledo, instructed that the peons should be given a piece of land (*chacra*) and a team of draught animals. In 1587 the loans began to be given in clothes and food. In 1589 it was permitted to loan the Indians one peso. Henceforth the size of the loans grew rapidly. Thus in 1598 the owners of the mines in Zacatecas and in 1604 the mine-owners in San-Luis-Potosí (both in New Spain) were able to give their workers loans equivalent to eight months pay.

For refusing to work to pay off his loan a peon could be severely punished. In 1567 permission was granted to hand Indian debtors in prison over to their creditors for the purpose of working off their debts. In 1575, 1597 and 1607 laws were passed on the finding and returning of runaway peons. Other steps were also taken in the creditors' interests, particularly when they were mine-owners. Laws passed in 1582, 1589 and 1602 freed peons who were prospecting for gold from *repartimiento*. Peonage at its height (and from the late 17th to the mid-18th century no latifundist could provide himself with a workforce without the use of these bond-serfs) was

characterized by the removal of any limitations on the size of loans and by the subsequent development (beginning in the 1640s) of legislation on the enslavement of peons, their search and return in the event of escape.

From the social and economic point of view, peonage was varied. Furthermore, in various parts of the Spanish colonies peons were given different names. In New Spain they were called *laborios*, *naborios*, *ganánes* and *terrajeros*. *Laborios* were peon gold-diggers who lived at the mines in special settlements. The *ganánes* lived on estates or in communes. The *terrajeros* were enslaved small holders or tenants living as a rule on land belonging to the latifundists. The peasants in New Granada who received land from the latifundists in exchange for building cattle pens and looking after them were frequently potential peons.

During this period the crown did everything it could to encourage peonage, especially among the mine workers. The laws of the Spanish government obliged the Indians to "hire themselves out" for labour and thus turned them into labourers. They set their daily pay, sanctioned their loans, forced them to work off their debts and, finally, arranged for debtors to be sought and returned. The crown granted enormous power over the peons to latifundists.

The growth of peonage also encouraged the dissolution of the communes, a process which was becoming increasingly evident. In those communes that were left two basic social groups formed—the nobility and the poor. The noble Indians—*principales*—frequently owned large tracts of land, mines and *obrajes*. The poor swelled the ranks of the tenants, the day-labourers and the peons.

Formally the position of a peon was incomparable with the lot of a slave. The peon was a free man who was obliged to pay his debt by money or labour. He could not be sold or given to someone apart from the land. He could not be separated from his family or deprived of his property. But in fact the peon was usually unable to take advantage of these rights. Loans of the kind he was given were virtually the equivalent of usury. The worker not only remained a debtor throughout his life, and consequently had to work hard and long attempting to clear the debt, but this dependence was hereditary and could be passed on to his family and the

next generation making them too the virtual property of the creditor.

Peonage ousted *repartimiento*, because this was required for the development of productive forces. The *mitayos* were sent to all different kinds of work and never given the time to develop any useful skills or farming experience. Meanwhile colonial production was relatively slow to develop, but this development made increasingly serious demands on the workers all the same. By virtue of their position the peons were better able to meet these demands. Throughout their lives they did the same jobs and consequently possessed work skills unlike the *mitayos*. It was to the peons that Spanish America owed the economic successes which by the second half of the 18th century had become apparent and which provided the economic foundation for the war of independence, a war that is justly regarded by Marxist historians as the first wave in the Latin American bourgeois revolutions.

Peonage played a major role in the development of the colonial economy. After the reforms of Charles III which promoted trade between Spain and her American colonies, export from them, according to Dominique de Pradt, increased from 18 million livres in 1778 to 201 million livres in 1788.

The gradual reduction in the economic importance of slavery and the increase of feudal exploitation which can be seen in the transition from the *encomienda* and *repartimiento* to peonage had a number of positive demographic consequences. By the mid-17th century the size of the Indian population had stabilized and then gradually began to increase. At the same time in Spanish America the number of metis and mulatos also increased. By 1823 they had formed 32 per cent of the population.

The increase in the indigenous and metis population from the mid-18th to the early 19th century was also encouraged by the fact that peonage began to combine with various forms of free hire which guaranteed great incentives for the workers and consequently greater productivity and a certain raising of living standards among the lower classes. The wish to impose limitations on peonage can also be seen in the legislation. This in 1784 a law was passed in New Spain limiting the amount of loans to the Indians to 5 pesos. But peonage lasted throughout the whole of the 19th century and in

many Latin American countries to the early 20th century. Its vestiges still exist today.

During the last period in the history of colonial feudalism revolutionary aspirations among the Indian and metis populations reached a qualitatively new level. The essentially anti-feudal class struggle waged by the lower orders took on hitherto unprecedented proportions and a clear national liberation orientation. Uprising after uprising occurred with the Indians demanding that the powers of the *corregidores* be reduced, that *mita* in the mines be abolished, that trade be made easier and that the burden of taxation be lowered, i. e. a reduction in everything that personified the colonial regime. Sometimes the authorities could not cope with these uprisings for years on end. From 1680 to 1692 the Indians of New Mexico defended their freedom and from 1742 to 1756 Juan Santos led a revolt in Huánuco (Peru). The struggle culminated in the peasant war in Peru which lasted from 1780 to 1783 which was led by Condorcanqui (Túpac Amaru II). This marked a severe crisis in the colonial regime and was the prologue to the war of independence.

The region of higher civilization was the centre of colonial feudalism, but elements of this socioeconomic structure modified by specifically local conditions were also found in other parts of America.

In Paraguay, for example, colonial feudalism had a number of features of its own. In the 1530s and 1540s the Spanish made extensive use of the socioeconomic potential of the primitive communal society. Such customs as polygamy (the Indians had numerous wives to work the households) and the collective labour and mutual help between relatives were made use of in the interests of better exploiting the Guaraní Indians. Subsequently the *encomienda* was introduced, but it was a system with its own unique features which remained almost intact till the end of the colonial period. There too from the early 17th to the mid-18th century there existed the famous *reducciones* of the Jesuits on which tens of thousands of Indians laboured for the benefit of the holy fathers.

American colonial feudalism which was most developed in the region of higher civilization undoubtedly had a number of features in common with the feudal structures in other parts of the

world. One such feature in the region under discussion, as elsewhere, was the parallel formation of both state and private feudal landownership with the clear predominance of the former at the early stages. The right to own land was granted for service to the supreme suzerain. Just as in Western Europe, the Baltic states, Russia and the East, vassals in the American colonies were not given the land itself, but the revenues from it. This was effected through the *encomienda*. But the Spanish colonialists strove inflexibly to increase the amount of unconditional landed property and enslave the indigenous population, and in this they resembled feudal lords of every stripe. The result of this were the latifundia and the transformation of the Indians into peons.

Some of the distinctive features of colonial feudalism also need to be noted. In Western Europe and a number of other parts of the world private feudal ownership arose as a result of the dissolution of communal landownership and the appearance of allodia together with the state transfer of the peasant communal lands to individuals among the dominant class, but in the regions of higher civilization we see another picture. There the process of forming private feudal property amounted largely to the seizure of Indian lands. There was another characteristic feature also. Throughout all the periods of the history of colonial feudalism slavery in one form or another figures directly or indirectly in the legislation. This was due partly to the heritage of the pre-Columbian slave-owning states and to the fact that enslavement became a weapon in the hands of the colonialists against the unsubdued indigenous tribes.

Colonial feudal exploitation with its additional burden of slavery was undoubtedly harsher than feudal exploitation in, for example, Western Europe. Feudal rent was exacted on a relatively larger scale than in the European countries and divided among a greater number of claimants—the crown, the local colonial administration, the latifundists, the mine-owners, the monopolist merchants, the Church and the Indian nobility. A description of those who exploited the Indians is contained in the works of a remarkable 17th-century chronicler, Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, himself of Indian descent: "The Indians fear the *corregidores* because they are worse than the snake. They devour people,

crushing out their lives and swallowing them whole. They fall upon them like wild animals and seize their property... The Indians fear the *encomenderos* for they are like the wild lion which once it has got its claws into its prey leaves nothing of it alive... The Indians fear the holy fathers who for all their softness are cunning like the fox. But they are educated and know more than foxes when it comes to robbing a peasant household or taking away his wives or children... The Indians fear the scribes for they are like the cat that lies in wait for the poor mouse which once seized in its claws cannot escape... The Indians fear the Spanish that scour the land in search of Indian stores. They are like the tiger and when they find such a store they force the Indians to declare what is in it and then consume and squander the stores, paying the Indian nothing in return... The first *caciques*, that is, the Indians who were in charge of ten men or sometimes only five, acted as though they were high-up *curacas* (leaders among the Incas.—*Auth.*). The Indians fear these because like the rat they gnaw away their property day and night, although no one ever sees them at their gnawing... Thus all these beasts acting together give the poor Indian no room to breathe.”

Exacting rent on such a large scale resulted in the Indian tribes dying out all over the country. All in all, colonial feudalism was of an exceptionally predatory nature whether in relation to the natural resources or the exploited masses. Finally, the last characteristic of this type of feudalism (as distinct from the type that existed in Europe) was the fact that here class antagonism coincided with racial antagonism and therefore the class struggle inevitably acquired a national liberation character.

The slave-owning plantations. As distinct from colonial feudalism, plantation slavery developed gradually in America over the course of approximately a century and a half. Whereas the socio-economic relations that characterized colonial feudalism were to a certain extent made ready by the preceding historical development of the region of high civilization, plantation slavery was the genuine spawn of colonialism and the world capitalist market. Its establishment on a continental scale required the seizure of enormous areas of Indian land, the import of millions of slaves and finally the establishment of close economic ties with the world market on whose requirements the functioning of

the American plantation system depended. Naturally this process did not take place simultaneously in all the many and varied regions that constituted the sphere of plantation slavery. But the common denominator between such regions was the fact that everywhere plantation slavery did develop, the colonialists had sown the seeds of feudal production relations and that large-scale feudal landownership was everywhere the rule.

Feudal relations were given their fullest representation in Brazil. The reason for this was because the main target of feudal Spain's colonial expansion was the region of high civilization, while British colonization began only in the 17th century and was effected by a country in which capitalist relations were intensively developing. The Brazilian *donatários* who from the mid-1530s had been the hereditary feudal owners of the *capitanias* were given extensive rights. They had personal use of one-fifth of the land area of the *capitanias*, they could set up courts and appoint their own administration, found towns and cities and determine their legal status, control all enterprise and trade with the indigenous population, exact taxes and duties, enslave unsubdued Indians and finally execute or pardon any one of the population dwelling on their territory. Their duties included paying the church tithe, surrendering to the crown one-twentieth part of the produce of their hunting and fishing, protecting the royal monopoly on brazil-wood production and bearing the cost of colonization and the defence of the *capitania*. Some of the duties agreed on when the *donatários* received their *capitanias* might not be fulfilled for objective reasons. For example, they were not required to recognize the royal monopoly on the export of spices, since no spices came from Brazil.

Four-fifths of the territory of each *capitania* were given to the Portuguese colonists, who were as a rule of noble birth, in the form of a conditional grant, called a *sesmaria*. The *sesmarias* were large rented holdings of fixed area, which had been distributed in Portugal since 1375 on payment to the treasury of a sum equivalent to one-sixth of the harvest and the undertaking of an obligation to cultivate the land. But in Brazil legislation on the *sesmarias* underwent a number of changes. The size of the holding was determined by the nobility and wealth of the colonist. During the 1550s and 60s fewer and fewer *sesmarias* were held on a rental basis as they were grad-

ually accorded the status of first life-long possessions and later, in the 1570s, of hereditary landed property. They were granted as a reward for civil and military service. At first their owners paid tithes to the crown and the Church, but later their fiscal duties were limited only to the latter. The requirement to cultivate the land in a fixed period of time also became gradually less and less obligatory. It remained in force until the 1560s. The vassal dependence of the *sesmaria* owners on the *donatários* was in the main only evident during times of war, when they were obliged to stand under the banner of their suzerain together with all their male relatives and slaves. In peace time they were to all intents and purposes the direct subjects of the crown.

But the *donatária* system did not justify itself. It could not ensure the successful colonization of Brazil nor provide a reliable defence against foreign invasion. The end of the autonomy of the *donatários* came in 1548 when the first governor-general of Brazil was appointed. The *capitanias* were gradually bought up or confiscated by the crown, or they passed over to it through lack of heirs among the *donatários*. In the 17th century the rights of the *donatários* were limited to financial administration and by the middle of the next century the last vestiges of this system had died out.

Meanwhile the practice of granting *sesmarias* which had developed during the domination of the *donatários* firmly established itself in Brazil and became one of the most important ways of forming large-scale landed property there. The size of the *sesmarias* fluctuated from 20 to 180 thousand hectares. And by gradually extending the boundaries of their holdings, the colonists became the owners of enormous latifundia.

But there was also another way in which vast landed holdings were formed. During the 16th and 17th centuries large expeditions set out for the interior regions of Brazil for the purpose of hunting Indians. These *bandeirantes* (from the word *bandeira*, "a banner"), as they were called, pursued two goals: to find a workforce for the plantations on the Atlantic coast and to take land from the indigenous population. Some idea of the size of these expeditions can be gained from the fact that they enslaved around 350,000 Indians. The Indians' response to this was to revolt. From 1658 to 1677 the Indians in Bahia offered almost continuous resistance to the

colonialists, and from 1671 to 1687 uprisings continued in Piauí and merged with a general uprising in the north-east which was put down only in 1713. The lands that had thus been "liberated" were seized by the *bandeirantes*. Subsequently they received a royal charter and these lands were made into life-long possessions which could be bequeathed to heirs.

In the *capitanias* of Bahia, Pernambuco, Ceará, Piauí, Maranhão and Goiás, whose populations increased during the 17th century, the demand for meat went up and in consequence large stock-rearing farms, known as *currais*, began to be formed.

For most of the colonial period the basis of Brazil's economy were the slave-owning plantations known as *fazenda*. The planter, or *fazendeiro* was the direct hereditary owner of the land and the slaves. Most of those who lived on the *fazenda* were in a state of bondage. The only freemen were the owner, his family, the plantation manager, slave-drivers and the mechanics who serviced the sugar cane milling plant.

The *fazenda* was a highly contradictory economic system. On the one hand, it had close links with the world market. The sugar, cotton and tobacco produced by the slaves went for export. But on the other, the *fazenda* was almost cut off from the country itself, playing a very small part in internal trade. It grew for its own consumption tapioca, maize, rice, beans, vegetables and fruit, and its other requirements were met by its own carpenters, founders, blacksmiths, potters, weavers and tailors, all of whom were slaves. These were elements of the subsistence economy of the *fazenda*.

The economic power of the *fazendeiros* was also reflected in politics. Until the early 1660s when after a long period of Spanish domination and Dutch intervention in Brazil, Portugal was again able to establish its sovereignty as a world colonial power, the functions of the local legislative and executive powers in the Brazilian *capitanias* were fulfilled by chambers (*câmaras*) consisting almost entirely of big landowners. *Fazendeiros* headed the colonial militia and exerted a strong influence on the priesthood, whose representatives were often related in kinship with them. During the second half of the 17th and the 18th centuries the royal administration reduced the importance of the *câmaras* to a minimum, pre-

vented planters, who as a rule were of Creole origins, from having access to political power and took a more serious interest in controlling their trade and economic ties with the world market.

For all its economic importance the *fazenda* was far from being the only type of land holding in Brazil. But although outside it relations among the free population were controlled by the norms of feudal law, elements of slavery inevitably influenced the whole economic life of the colony and the social relations that had formed within it. On the lands belonging to the petty and middle landowners a few slaves were often found working. But the ordinary Brazilian *roseiro* (*rosa*—meant a plot of land cleared for ploughing) frequently found himself under the power of the *fazendeiro* who either through the use of direct force or because the former was heavily indebted reduced such farmers to the level of bondsmen.

Land in Brazil could also be leased. The peasants of Indian, metis or mulato stock, the *lavradores* as they were called, rented land from the *fazendeiros* for an average of 12 to 16 per cent of the crop. They were also obliged to mill their sugar cane at the *fazendeiro's* milling plant and provide him with half of their production of sugar and rum. Like the *roseiros* the *lavradores* also tried to acquire some slaves.

The petty and medium-sized peasant holdings together with the tenants' farms formed a feudal belt around the *fazenda* which had considerable effect on the development of the latter. The large slave-owning plantations worked for the external markets, while the *roseiros* and the *lavradores* produced a large amount of the food required for internal consumption which included those living on the *fazenda*.

There was one other stratum among the rural population which comprised the *agregados* (those who had joined), the *moradores* (those who had settled) and the *foreiros* (those who paid *foro*, or rent in kind). Whereas the first and the second group were metis or mulatos, the latter was comprised of poor Portuguese. They were all allowed to build small dwellings on the *fazendeiro's* land and farm small allotments. Part of their crop they used to feed themselves and part was paid to the *fazendeiro*. The *agregados*, the *moradores* and the *foreiros* lived in conditions of dependence on the *fazendeiro* which amounted to semi-bondage, if not at times slavery (many

of them were indeed descended from slaves), and they worked for him for nothing. Thus the price they paid for a piece of land and the patronage of the *fazendeiro* was their own personal freedom.

As in the stock-rearing farms of Spanish America we also find elements of colonial feudalism in the *fazendas-currais*. They were divided into several enclosures of up to 12,000 hectares. The herds of these *fazendas* were in the charge of a *vaqueiro* (stockman) and his various *fbricas* (workmen). In the larger enclosures the owner appointed several *vaqueiros* and 10-11 *fbricas*, who were all Indians, metis or mulatos. The *fbricas* were paid in money either monthly or in a lump sum once a year. Not infrequently they were given clothes, spirits or hunting equipment instead of money. The *fbricas* who worked as herdsmen were entitled to cultivate a small piece of land, which they usually turned into a kitchen garden. A *vaqueiro* who became rich enough sometimes became the owner of a stock-rearing *fazenda* which he ran together with his family.

In the stock-rearing regions the system of leasing found expression in the emergence of so-called *sitios* which were holdings of up to 4,000 hectares. On such holdings the tenant and his family looked after the herd, provided completely for their own food and paid the rent through the sale of cattle.

In the late 17th and 18th centuries cotton plantations began to appear on the lands between the Sertão Plain and the coast. Here alongside the slaves the *moradores*, the *agregados* and the *fbricas* began to be extensively exploited (particularly during the harvesting); their labour was a variety of *corvée*.

In 1611 during the period of Spanish domination *encomienda* was introduced, but it did not become widespread due to the high rate at which the indigenous were dying out. Indian labour was also exploited on the *reducciones* which belonged to the monastic orders, particularly the Jesuits. The large-scale Jesuit *reducciones* were found along the Paraguayan border and along the lower reaches of the Amazon.

In other parts of South America the slave-owning plantations appeared considerably later, during the second half of the 17th and 18th centuries, while other types of land holding and land tenure were much more poorly represented than in Brazil. Nevertheless, in Cuba there existed small peasant hold-

ings called *vegas*, small plots of land producing tobacco usually found in the lower reaches or along the banks of rivers. Slave plantations appeared in New Granada in the 16th and 17th centuries along side holdings which exploited the labour first of encomiendized natives and then of Indians-*mitayos* and peons, but they were economically far less viable. The plantations only began to be seriously developed in the second half of the 18th century.

In the 17th and early 18th centuries influential English aristocrats, nobles and favourites of the king were given a charter which allowed them to take possession of vast colonies on the Atlantic coast of North America. The majority of these subsequently came under the direct control of the crown. Virginia, Maryland, North and South Carolina and Georgia saw the intensive development of plantation slavery.

The main method of allotting land to the wealthy English colonists, who settled in Lords-Proprietors' colonies or in Virginia, which in 1623 became a crown possession, was per capita allotment. In the 17th century these allotments were 50 acres (approx. 20 hectares) in size, but frequently planters were given much larger holdings. Since their holdings depended on extensive rather than intensive methods they either took or bought for a pittance the lands belonging to the Indians, or acquired more and more allotments from the land speculators. Between 1626 and 1632 the size of the largest plantation in Virginia was around 400 hectares, but between 1695 and 1700 this rose to 5,500 hectares. Though there were middle and petty farmers among the colonists, it was the rich planters who determined the economic potential of the region. All colonists were given the life-long use of their land and held it on condition of payment of a fixed rent (quit-rent), which was used instead of all the other types of feudal taxes and tithes. Only farmers who worked land that they had seized themselves did not pay rent. This practice which took place against the will of the authorities became extremely widespread as the squatters' reaction against the feudal prerogatives of the nobles and the crown.

By the end of the 17th century the tobacco, rice and indigo plantations were being worked in the main by whites who were to all intents and purposes slaves and who were known as "servants". Deprived of a means of existence in England they had gone

abroad in search of a better lot. But to repay the captain of the ship for their passage and board on the crossing, they were forced to sell themselves into slavery for several years. Some made working contracts while they were still in England, others signed agreements that they would find a master for themselves in at least three days upon their arrival in the colony. This poor white element also contained criminals who agreed to serve their sentences in the New World.

The white "servants" were cheaper than the black slaves, costing £8-10 as against £15-20 which was the cost of a black slave. But the whites suffered badly in the hot climate of the plantations, and in any case had to be set free after a number of years. Towards the end of the 17th century the white "servants" began to be replaced with slaves brought over from Africa. Thus, whereas in 1680 there were 6,900 black slaves in the colony or 4 per cent of the population (not including the Indians), by 1770 this figure had risen to 459,800, or approximately 21 per cent. Between 1641 and 1749 various statutes were issued legalizing the black slavery.

The dreams of the "servants" for acquiring their own land (officially they were entitled to an allotment of fifty acres) rarely if ever came true. Many never lived to see their freedom, while the majority of those that did had no money and so could not start their own farms. They were forced into becoming hired labourers. Whereas in Europe the main source of primary capital accumulation had been expropriation of the workers' property, in British America this was found in a system of measures that was designed to prevent the poor peasants from having access to the land. Thus of the 5,000 "servants" in Maryland from 1669 to 1680 only 241, or 4 per cent, received certificates allowing them to own land.

In South America a mode of production corresponding to slave labour was devised. A study of the plantations in the American south, which from the very outset were designed for the world market, shows clearly that capitalist production existed there only in the formal sense, since black slavery excluded the possibility of free hired labour, which is the very basis of capitalist production. The planters in North America, the "capitalists", built up their economy on black slave labour, but the mode of production introduced by them did not arise

from slavery, but was implanted in it—in this case the capitalist and the landowner were the same person.

Plantation slavery in the New World differed quite considerably from slavery in the ancient world (although there was something similar to it in respect of the legal status of the slave). It produced highly marketable commodities for the world market and, being “formally” subordinated to capital, created surplus value for it. Furthermore, the slave-owners and West European capitalists received not only surplus product, but a large part of the necessary product as well. The labour of the plantation slaves (just like the labour of the *encomiendized* Indians, *mitayos* and peons) to a large extent encouraged primary accumulation in Western Europe and consequently the subsequent victory of the bourgeois revolutions and the capitalist mode of production.

The high marketability of a plantation's product and its connections with the world market, which to a certain extent conditioned the capitalist nature of the enterprise, gave the plantation a number of specific features. The work of one slave was so low-productive, that the plantation could only be assured of its income by the exploitation of large masses of slaves. For the slaves' labour to produce the maximum results in the minimum time (this was the main aim of the slave-owner who was out to reimburse himself for the outlay he had made on the purchase of the slaves), their exploitation had to be extremely intensive. Meticulous economies were therefore practised in expenditure on the slaves' upkeep.

Unable to turn the Indian slave into an economically viable worker, the colonialists in the American South, as has already been mentioned, began to make increasing use of the whites as slaves. By 1770 no less than 250,000 “servants” had been brought to the British colonies.

But the position of the whites could in no way be compared to that of the black slaves. According to approximate data, from the 15th century until 1807 some 12 million slaves were taken from Africa, predominantly to the New World. The overall losses suffered by the African continent due to the slave-trade which included those killed during slave hunts, and in the process of delivery to the slave ships, as well as the monstrously high mortality rate

during the Atlantic crossings, amounted to between 50 and 55 million persons. An even worse fate awaited the Africans who were driven from the slave markets to the plantations. The slaves slept for no more than three to four hours a day. During the harvesting and milling of the sugar cane, which lasted for 4-5 months, they worked for six days and three nights a week. Not infrequently night work went on throughout the whole year. Their board was completely inadequate. On the island of Barbados, for example, a slave in the early 18th century was given per week less than 2.5 kilos of maize flour and a pound of salted, usually poor-quality, fish. In Brazil the cost of feeding the slaves was £4 per year—three to four times lower than the necessary limit. The death rate among the slaves was 3 times greater than the birth rate, and in Barbados 5-6 times greater.

Killing a slave was not considered a crime. Punishments inflicted upon them were unbelievably barbaric. For instance, they would be bound in chains, forced to lie on their stomachs while their feet were burned or their fingers and toes broken by two revolving cylinders. Branding was widely used, including the branding of children. Theft by a slave was more often than not punishable by death.

The slaves resisted their oppressors in various ways with the struggle against them sometimes taking on hidden forms. Sabotage, for example, malingering, squandering, negligence, self-mutilation, pretending to be weaker or less capable than in fact, damaging tools, destroying work-animals, theft and arson were all in the slaves' arsenal of weapons against their masters. But quite often their resistance would take on more overt forms both active and passive. The sources refer to instances of both individual and mass suicides. Having no weapons the slaves killed themselves by eating poisons, or by such methods as forcing their tongues so hard into their larynxes that the flow of air was cut off and they suffocated. Often in desperation they would kill their own children at birth, or when really driven to extremities attack and kill their guards and their masters.

The most widespread form of resistance was running away from the plantation into parts of the interior of the country that were difficult to reach. Here they would form settlements whose inhabitants for many years and even decades would defend

their lives and their freedom. The better known examples of these were the *quilombos* in Brazil who created the Republic of Palmares (which lasted from 1630 to its destruction in 1697), the Maroons in Jamaica and the free black communities in South and North Carolina, Virginia and Georgia. In Brazil the attempts on the part of the slave-owners to prevent slaves escaping led in 1699 to the appearance of the notorious "forest captains", who mercilessly pursued and destroyed runaway slaves.

Finally, slave plots and uprisings were common. The largest of these took place in Brazil in 1607, 1692, 1713, 1719, 1756 and 1772. From the mid-17th century to the outbreak of the Civil War in the American South up to 250 such uprisings took place.

The profitability of the plantations was not only due to their use of slave labour *en masse*, but also to the fact that they were on lands that from time immemorial had been fertile. These lands required no great effort to cultivate (irrigation, drainage, or the use of large amounts of fertilizer were unnecessary) and produced excellent harvests with the most primitive methods of farming.

Plantation farming was extensive and the attitude of the planter to the land was undoubtedly even more rapacious and greedy than it had been under colonial feudalism.

The plantation slave had absolutely no interest in raising the productivity of labour and had no chance to become qualified at anything. To the slave-owner the only difference between a slave and an inanimate tool or a work-animal was the fact that the former was able to speak.

In the British West Indies in the late 18th century tilling the soil continued to be done on the plantations by means of the hoe, even though the plough was three to four times more productive. The same method was used on the sugar enterprises. Although in the late 18th century ten-horse-power steam engines, condensators and evaporators were being used in England, in Jamaica and Barbados the main source of energy remained the work-animals which turned the mills that ground the sugar cane. This method resulted in a loss of two-thirds of the sugar juice.

Plantation production developed not through the introduction of any internal reserves, but as the result of simply increasing the number of exploited

slaves. For example, in 1600 there were more than 70,000 slaves in Brazil, but by 1798 this figure had risen to 1,581,000. In the United States the number of black slaves working on the cotton fields went up from 697,000 in 1790 to 3,953,000 in 1860.

For all their close and stable ties with the world market and West European capital, the slave plantations, nevertheless, retained a number of feudal characteristics. These included large-scale inalienable and indivisible landed property protected by the right of primogeniture, elements of natural economy in the consumer sector of the plantations, their weak links with the internal market and the presence of a fairly numerous agricultural population which was tied to the plantation economy, but which lived according to feudal law—these were the small and medium-sized landowners, the tenants and the day-labourers.

Capitalist and feudal elements were in continual rivalry in the economies of the slave plantations. The use of slave labour increased at times when ties with the world market expanded and production became more generally marketable. But in times of curtailment, in-kind payment became the trend and the plantations often turned towards the internal market with production relations of a feudal type beginning to oust slavery.

The slave plantations not only experienced the influence of the spontaneous processes of objective feudalization. Their links with the world market continually met opposition from the governments of the metropolises, which forcibly implanted in plantation production the feudal methods of farming which were natural and customary for them. In Brazil this found expression in excessive taxation which began to grow from the late 1650s and early 1660s, royal monopolies (on the mining of salt and the salt trade, on the smelting of iron, on the working of clay, on the tanning of leather and on the production of wine), bans on or the strict control of any private enterprise and the creation of privileged trading companies. The planters in South America were continually burdened by their dependence on the crown and the lords-proprietors, which manifested itself in, for example, the payment of quit-rent and various fines, in the need to observe the laws on the inalienability and indivisibility of the feudal manors and in the ban on seizing land in the West.

This subjective feudalization from above ran into contradiction with the development of the productive forces of the colonies and with the capitalist tendencies that were inherent in the nature of the highly marketable produce of the slave plantation. In Brazil these contradictions were reflected in the plots and uprisings of the Creole-*fazendeiros* in Maranhão in 1684-1685 (known as the Beckmann revolt) and in 1759, in Bahía in 1691 and 1712, in Pernambuco in 1710-1711, in Minas Gerais from 1710 to 1713 and again in 1720 (known as the dos Santos uprising), in São Paulo in 1718, in Goiás in 1733 and in Pará in 1755. No less determined in their resistance were the planters in the southern British colonies. Here there were the risings of Nathaniel Bacon in Virginia (1676), Davis and Pait (1676) and Cood (1689) in Maryland, and Culpeper and Durant in North Carolina in 1677. It is hardly surprising that the southern planters took active participation in the War of Independence which lasted from 1775 till 1783, or the Brazilian *fazendeiros* in the Inconfidência plot of 1789, in the Pernambuco uprising in 1817, and in the Brazilian struggle for independence (1820-1822), or the Venezuelan slave-owners in the war for the independence of Spanish America (1810-1826).

The economy of the American North. The region of European-North American feudalism comprised those parts of North America that had been colonized by the Europeans, but in which there was either no or very little plantation slavery. In its southern part were the central group of the British colonies—New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania and New York—which tended to cultivate grain crops and where small and medium-sized holdings existed alongside the large estates. Further east lay New England—the colonies of Connecticut, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Massachusetts where small and medium-sized farms tended to predominate with kitchen gardening, handicrafts, various small industries and trade widespread. Finally, to the north lay New France, which became a British possession in 1763. The region began to develop in the early 17th century and existed as an entity until the formation of the United States.

The whole of British America was considered crown land. Both before and after the Restoration the Stuarts granted their noblemen enormous areas of land in both the north and the south. Thus, Fer-

dinando Georges received feudal rights over the province of Maine (which subsequently became part of Massachusetts), John Mason was given New Hampshire, while New York went to the Duke of York. Lord John Berkley and George Carteret were given New Jersey and Admiral Sir William Penn, whom the crown owed the sum of £16,000, received what was subsequently to become Pennsylvania.

The fundamental principles by which the Lords-Proprietors were governed when organizing the running of their colonies and determining the bases of their social life were formed during the Restoration period and naturally permeated by bellicose feudalism. They provided for the maintenance of the feudal hierarchical social estates, ensured that the higher offices and titles of state were made hereditary, guaranteed a stable balance between large and small-scale landownership, fixed the size of private land holdings to inflexibly accord with the state offices and general social position held by their owners and maintained the unbreakable bonds between large-scale landed property and its right to the prerogative of state authority over the population living on it.

The lords, who ruled through charters granted to them, were completely independent feudal rulers invested with the broadest administrative, judicial and military powers. Their position as vassals in relation to the Stuarts was expressed only in the presentation of various purely symbolic presents, like Indian arrows, etc. It is true that in their charters (apart from that granted to the Duke of York) it was stated that any laws to be made by the lords should be approved at a meeting of freeholders, but with the enormous powers at their disposal the lords could influence the elections to these representative bodies and ultimately ensure that they functioned in accordance with their own will.

In the proprietorial colonies the sale of land and the fragmentation of holdings was forbidden. Land not only could not be wholly or partially sold, it could not be given or passed on to other persons. There were also laws on the inalienability of land. The land of the feudal proprietor could not be taken away for the arrears or debts of its owner. The principle of primogeniture was everywhere observed. Younger sons or daughters could not inherit land, but were paid a fixed compensation, which in the case of girls frequently came in the form of a dowry.

The British crown tried to revive even such feudal laws as had long disappeared in the metropolis. The lords, for example, had the right of subinfeudation, which meant that they could present manors, grant land to freeholders, determine the size of rent and regulate the obligations of the holders. Another anachronism was the right granted them of establishing the frankpledge, in which the population was divided into tithings, or groups of 10 men who were made mutually responsible for each other.

The formation in America of feudal palatinates which were virtually independent from the crown had important political causes. The British government was not able to enforce its administration in all the colonies and so the Lords-Proprietors were required to countervail the immigrants who were flooding into America and who were basically opposed to the official policies of London.

By the time of the War of Independence only the lords of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maine and New Hampshire still retained their original charters, but in the colonies ruled by the crown the feudal rights of the lords were not affected either. Despite the differences between them the crown and the lords together opposed the dependent feudal holders of the land.

The right to holdings of all kinds—manors, freeholds, copyholds—implied, as it did in the South, the obligatory payment of quit-rent. Delay in payment of this rent could result in the seizure of property and the imprisonment of the debtor. Failure to pay for a period of three years meant that the land and the farm were subject to confiscation.

The colonization of New England, which became the bulwark of Puritanism in America, was effected by other methods. Various corporations and societies (most of which were religious in character) with backing from the commercial and industrial companies like the Plymouth Co., the Dorchester Co., the Massachusetts Gulf Co. and other entrepreneurs, bought up small farms—the predominant form of land holding in the region—whose owners formed themselves into self-governing communities.

Company shareholders and ordinary settlers were given land, some of whom were granted a life-long lease or for several generations, while some received hereditary titles. The land holder was obliged to provide room on his land for a certain number of

persons. He was not entitled either to sell his holding or to give it as a gift without the permission of the company or, if the land came under its control, of the town. Land holding by towns became very widespread in New England. With the sanction of the Council of New England (as the Plymouth Company came to be called in 1620) or of another company or authority in a colony a group of new settlers could be given land and the right to found a city. Sometimes the settlers took this land as squatters, and sometimes again they “bought” it from the Indians. As the populations of these towns grew the communal lands disappeared.

Land holding in New England was substantially different from land holding in the crown and proprietorial colonies—there relations of a new bourgeois type were emerging. But the farmers from New England and their compatriots from, say, New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey showed, like all the farming communities of the British North, a number of similar and essentially feudal characteristics in their way of life. First, the farmers of Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island and other Puritan colonies were never ever officially freed from paying quit-rent, although they constantly fought against this feudal institution. Secondly, for a long time the economies of most of the farms in the North were of a natural or semi-natural character. On their small allotments the farmers grew wheat, maize, oats and rye. They also kept cattle and did a certain amount of domestic weaving. The better-off farmers exploited the labour of “servants” and their relations with them were of a clearly feudal character—a perfect example of the juridical inequality between exploiter and exploited that was so uncharacteristic of bourgeois society.

Whereas the English crown tried to implant in America social and economic relations that in the metropolis were already on the way out, the rulers of France introduced there the seigneurial system which was still viable and capable of resisting the development of capitalism.

The colony of New France comprised several groups of settlements stretched out over an area from New Orleans in the Mississippi Delta to Louisbourg on the island of Cape Breton. The main settlements, however, were strung out in a narrow forty-mile strip along the St. Lawrence River. The granting of feudal rights over the land began there in

1633 by the New France Company, and from 1663 when Canada was declared a crown colony, by the royal administration.

The land was divided into seigniories and prospective lords for these holdings were approved by the king. Originally the area of a seigniority could be measured in hundreds of square kilometres, but in 1667 the crown, fearing that they might become excessively powerful and also wanting a more intensive utilization of the land, limited their size to from 50 to 150 square kilometres. The lord was responsible to the royal administration for settling the land he had received, clearing it for ploughing and pastures, building mills and laying roadways. But he enjoyed extensive rights. He exacted a tax from his people, conducted the courts and could sell, lease or bequeath his lands. One of the largest landowners in this colony was the Church.

Seigniorial land was divided into two parts—the domain, which belonged to the lord, and land that was given as a feudal holding to the French peasant settlers, or *habitants* as they were called in Canada. The domain land could be used by the lord himself or leased. He could have no direct relations with the *habitants* if he preliminarily gave the lands intended for them to the feudal holder, the subseignior, who was dependent on him.

The feudal rent received by the lord through exploitation of the *habitants* comprised a number of payments and taxes. The feudal payments included *cens*, a payment of from 1 to 8 sous as a recognition of the feudal lord's title (the piece of land for which *cens* was paid was called the *censive* and the holder, the *censitaire*); an annual rent of from 1 to 5 livres; an annual payment (which could be rendered in kind) that was made on St. Martin's Day; and finally a tax which was paid on taking possession of a new holding (in the event of a sale or the transference of a *censive*) and assessed at one-twelfth of the value of that holding. *Corvée* also existed. At first it was required for a period of 6 days in the year, but in the early 18th century this was increased to thirty days, the very thirty days that were of the greatest importance to the *habitant* for working his own land, i.e. the days of ploughing, sowing, mowing and harvesting. Also burdensome for the *habitant* were the seigniorial *banalités*, for example the right of grinding according to which the *censitaire* was obliged to use the lord's mill for grinding his grain and

pay one-fourteenth of his flour for the service. The *habitant* was also obliged to pay his lord one-eleventh part of all fish caught near his home. The *censitaire* paid separately for the use of pasture land and could not cut down any trees in the nearby forests without informing his lord, who had priority rights over woodcutting, particularly of the pines and oaks. If the *habitant* wanted to sell something, the lord could, if he so wished, insist on being the first buyer. To all this should be added the already mentioned right of the lord to conduct the courts. After the institution of the royal courts, the lords still maintained in their hands the courts of the first instance.

Apart from the leaseholders and various kinds of day-labourers the lord's domains employed white, black and Indian slaves. Because of their cost African slaves were a rarity in Canada, but Indian slaves, particularly for domestic use, were fairly common.

After the English took Canada in the late 18th century, the colony became clearly divided from the social and economic point of view into two parts. In Lower Canada the seigniorial system continued to predominate as did the semi-natural economies of the *habitants*. Quit-rent was also introduced here. The English system of freehold was according to the new rulers of the colony a possible alternative to the seigniorial system, but only in the lands that had been newly granted or recently opened up. In Upper Canada, which the English had already been developing intensively (around the upper reaches of the St. Lawrence, the shore of Lake Ontario and the territories between this lake and the Ottawa valley) the land was given to its new landlords, who leased it out in separate allotments.

The feudal system which the French and the English exported to America underwent such considerable transformations that we may justly speak of European-North American feudalism. Furthermore, together with the feudal institutions that were brought to this part of America we may also note elements of the new, bourgeois relations. The very colonization of America and the mass emigration from England were due to the development of the capitalist system in that country, the appearance of an agriculture and industry corresponding to that system and the emergence of hired labour. It is not surprising, therefore, that the local civil servants and bureaucrats, both of the crown and of the

Lords-Proprietors were far from being the zealous servants of their feudal patrons. These were the entrepreneurs during the period of primary accumulation, who for bribes were willing to transgress the existing laws and seize vast areas of land for themselves and for speculation, i. e. for resale to capitalist businessmen who were attracted to the New World by the relatively cheap cost of land and the possibility of quick profits. Neither the local administrators nor their enterprising clients were interested in the feudalization of landed property. The big buyers bought up the land to sell it at a profit to the small holders. For this purpose they organized themselves into land companies. An analogous phenomenon was the speculation in furs in New France where from the end of the 17th century a monopoly on the fur trade was held by a group of rich entrepreneurs.

The ideology of the lower classes in British America, who for economic, political, religious and other reasons opposed the metropolis, was even less feudal. The policies of the crown and the Lords-Proprietors, who forced a medieval social and economic way of life on the settlers, were met with violence. The anti-feudal struggle of the farmers became widespread. The American farmer had little resemblance to the European peasant due to the dual, if not triple nature of his position: in relation to the feudal landowners he was the victim of exploitation and in relation to the Indians he was the conqueror of their land, but, and this is of extreme importance, he was also the defender of his feudal lords (and thus indirectly of the rule they imposed) from the indigenous Indians. Thus the feudal lords of British America both oppressed the farmers and relied on them in their struggle against the Indians.

Even without resorting to weapons the farmers could offer stronger resistance against the feudal owners than the European peasants could. The object of the farmers' struggle was primarily quit-rent. The farmers wanted a reduction in the amounts to be paid and the replacement of monetary payments by payments in kind. In the event that the latter were permitted, they argued with the administration over the assessed cost of their agricultural produce, its quality and conditions of delivery. Not infrequently the farmers forced the collectors to quit their holdings; uprisings were the high-

est form of protest against the colonial regime. This happened, for instance, between 1689 and 1691 when an armed uprising led by Jacob Leisler took place in New York.

The Puritan colonies in New England constituted a particular threat to the feudal system in British America. They were not only opposed to quit-rent and the individual statutes of the colonial powers, but openly and consciously fought for free bourgeois landed property. After their restoration the Stuarts tried with renewed zeal to feudalize the Puritan colonies, but the Glorious Revolution and the Massachusetts uprising in 1689 put an end to this.

The specific character of European-North American feudalism was also determined by the existence of vast areas of Indian land to the west. The desire of the landless settlers arriving from Europe to take it resulted in a conflict between the landowners and these pioneers who lived on the ever-troublesome borders of the colonial and the Indian worlds, a conflict which was just about the most serious in the social and economic life of British America. As they moved further west the pioneers broke away from the power of the landowning feudal lords and by doing this undermined it. Their continuous struggle with the Indians also disrupted the colonial hierarchy's profitable trade in furs, for it had been the Indians who had provided them. In 1683 a law was passed preventing private persons from buying land from the Indians. In the 1730s measures were stepped up against those who without authority went beyond the bounds of their border settlements and seized new lands. But the pioneer was somewhat of a contradictory figure, for by fighting against the Indians he constituted a buffer, as it were, which was not without benefit to colonial regime.

The natural environment in North America, which influenced social and economic relations there, also led to a transformation of European feudal institutions. From the cramped, relatively overpopulated and comparatively poor (in natural resources) Europe the settlers came to a world whose size and wealth was incommensurate with anything they had left behind in the native countries. The lands which lay to the west seemed infinite, the soil was suitable for the most varied crops, the woods and forests were full of animals and birds, the rivers and lakes abounded with fish. Hunting and fishing were always a reliable means of existence, both for

the pioneer from the British colonies and for the *habitant* who had left his master for the shores of Lake Ontario. One of the most important natural resources was the abundance of fur animals.

All these above factors, interacting and supplementing one another as they did, resulted in European-North American feudalism functioning as a weakened variation of the feudalism which developed in England and France.

The end of European-North American feudalism came only at the cost of a long and bitter struggle. In the mid-18th century the Regulator Movement, which produced the most powerful anti-feudal demonstrations of the whole colonial period, began to get underway in British America. In 1765 this movement came out in open opposition with a revolt in New York headed by W. Prendergast which lasted till the following year. Ten years later in 1775 the War of Independence began, lasting until 1783 when America declared its independence from the British crown. In 1837-1838 a bourgeois anti-colonial revolution took place in Canada. But the struggle against vestiges of the feudal past continued into the American Civil War of 1861-1865 and the Reconstruction of the South which followed it.

The culture of colonial America. The second discovery of America, which interrupted the independent cultural development of the ancient civilizations of the continent and the numerous Indian tribes that inhabited it, laid the foundations for a whole family of new American cultures. From the point of view of its cultural development the New World can be divided into two parts—the region of higher civilization, where there lived a comparatively dense multi-million Indian population and where colonial feudalism developed most fully, and the other territories whose colonization brought with it the virtual genocide of the indigenous population.

In the 16th century Spanish culture predominated in America. This was the century not only of the bloody conquistadors, but also of a number of great men of arts and science—Bartolomé de Las Casas, the great humanist and author of the famous *Historia de las Indias*, Alonso de Ercilla y Zuñiga, who in his poem *La Araucana* praised the bravery of the Indians, Francisco Hernández, the naturalist who conducted studies over extensive parts of New Spain, and José de Acosta, who laid the foundations

for the study of the physical geography of Spanish America. It was at this time also that Garcilaso de la Vega, one of the first Spanish-American social thinkers and compiler of the *Comentarios Reales Que Tratan del Origen de los Incas* (Original Commentaries of the Incas), began to form his philosophy.

The introduction of Spanish culture into the region of higher civilization had the most important consequences for the development of American cultures. For almost two and a half centuries this region functioned as the cultural centre of the continent and exercised considerable influence on the surrounding periphery. This was primarily due to the fact that the heritage of the great Indian civilization had, thanks to the somewhat ambiguous attitude of the Spanish colonialists towards local culture, not been lost. As fanatic Christians, the Spanish were bent on destroying the pagan culture of the Indians, particularly since this represented for the latter a source of national self-consciousness. But at the same time the colonial feudal regime required for its own stability conservation of the traditional communities under their *caciques*, or chieftains, and so it preserved the ancient culture. Thus though the colonialists fought against pre-Columbian culture, they were unable to live without it. It was impossible to destroy this culture without at the same time destroying the native Indians who were its bearers. But the latter constituted an undisputed value, since it was they whose labour created the wealth of the colonies. The duplicity of Madrid's policy in this respect is shown with particular clarity in the activities of the Catholic Church and its orders, whose undivided influence penetrated every aspect of the spiritual life of the colonies.

Of considerable importance also was the fact that as the centre of Spanish possessions in America the region of higher civilization attracted greater attention from Madrid and the Papacy and therefore became the focal point for both the state and the Church. It was this region that was directly linked to Spain through the so-called "System of Two Flotillas"—which was the only official means of communication between the metropolis and its American possessions from the mid-16th century to the late 18th century. The "system" amounted to this: one of the flotillas brought goods to Veracruz and another to Cartagena and Portobelo, then each having taken on board a fresh cargo from the colo-

nies they would meet up at Havana and set out on the return journey.

The questions facing the colonial administration—questions that related to such matters as designing methods for exploiting the Indian population, organizing their conversion to Christianity and conducting various kinds of studies of the vast area under their control—could not but draw the attention of the Spanish authorities to the problems of culture, and particularly of education. After the destruction of the pre-Columbian civilization the conquest inevitably had to bring about new cultural values, for the colonialists could not rely on brute force alone. It is characteristic that it was during the 16th century when the colonial regime was just establishing itself that the Spanish authorities began to pay attention to the problem of educating the Indians and metis. In 1523 Pedro de Gante, a Franciscan friar who originally came from Holland, founded the first school at Texcoco for Indians. In 1529 the first school for the indigenous population of Mexico, calling itself the San José de Belén de los Naturales, was founded, as was in 1536 the College of Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco, which taught the basis of Christian theology, the Spanish language, rhetoric, music, logic and philosophy. The first college for the metis was the San Juan de Letran, which was founded in 1547.

By the early 18th century the religious orders had founded 22 colleges of various leanings in New Spain alone. Most important of these was the Jesuit College of SS. Peter and Paul in Mexico. Between 1535 and 1539 the first books in the colony were published, but by the end of the century there were twelve publishers working in Mexico alone.

The Spanish brought the traditions of the universities to the New World. The first university was founded in Santo Domingo in 1538, then in Mexico and Lima in 1551, in Cordoba in 1613, in Santa Fe de Bogota in 1622, in Chuquisaca in 1624 and in Guatemala in 1681. The most important university centre in America was the University of Mexico, whose teachers responded to the practical needs of America. For example, they studied the Indian languages and practical medicine which included elements of ancient Indian healing. The universities were financed as a rule by *encomiendas* under their control.

The colleges and universities of New Spain had

on their teaching staffs a number of prominent men of science and letters. Thus Bernardino de Sahagún, a humanist historian who described the civilization of the Aztecs in his *Historia General de las Cosas de Nueva Espana* (General History of Events in New Spain) and Garcia de Cisneros, a missionary and polyglot, both worked at the College of Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco. One of the most famous teachers at the University of Mexico in the 17th century was Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora, an astronomer, mathematician, geographer, historian, naturalist, philologist, philosopher and poet. From 1671 to 1701 he published a work entitled *Lunario*. In 1682 at the same time as the English astronomer Edmund Halley he conducted independent studies on the famous periodic comet and gave a scientific explanation of the phenomenon. This brought him under attack by the Church, and the subsequent dispute which arose became the first major scientific dispute in the New World. When in 1691 and 1692 a blight suddenly hit the wheat crop in New Spain, Góngora used a microscope to find the organism responsible. He compiled a valuable chart of the Gulf of Pensacola (on the north coast of the gulf of Mexico) and wrote a number of historical works on New Spain including the *Historia de la Provincia de Tejas* (History of the Province of Texas) and the *Historia del Imperio de los Chichimecas* (History of the Chichimec Empire). While dying of an unknown disease Góngora requested that a post-mortem be carried out on his body to determine the cause of the illness.

No less varied were the interests of his younger Peruvian contemporary, Pedro de Peralta y Barnuevo. Mathematician, astronomer, meteorologist, naturalist and historian, Barnuevo published a poem entitled *Lima Fundada* (The Founding of Lima), constructed a project to build a dike at Callao and collected legends of the Incas. Another Peruvian, Alvaro Alonso Barba, was a specialist in metallurgy and wrote a book entitled *El Arte de los Metales* (The Art of Metals).

In the 17th century a whole constellation of prominent poets and writers appeared in New Spain and Peru. Though experiencing the considerable influence of Spanish literature, the writers were nevertheless Americans. Their themes were the natural environment of the continent, its historical past and the social life of the colony. This interest

became the source of the distinctive national flavour of the Latin American literatures. In 1604 the Spanish-Mexican poet, Bernardo de Valbuena, published a poem entitled *Grandeza Mejicana*. Subsequently New Spain saw the appearance of the works of the Spanish dramatist, Juan Ruiz de Alarcon y Mendoza, whose play *La Verdad Sospechosa* (Doubtful Truth) inspired Pierre Corneille to write *Le menteur* (The Liar). The Mexican poetess, Juana Inéz de la Cruz, is known throughout the world. In a work entitled *Villancicos Devoted to San Pedro Nolasco* she criticized slavery for the first time in the literature of the New World, and in another, entitled *Respuesta a Hermana Filotea* (the pseudonym "Sister Filotea" belonged to one of de la Cruz' opponents, the Archbishop of New Spain), she spoke up for women's rights.

Another great poet was Juan de Espinosa Medrano, who came from a poor Indian family in Peru. He also became the first literary critic in America. In a treatise entitled *Apologético en Favor de Don Luis de Góngora* (Apology for Don Luis the Góngora), published in 1662, Medrano pointed to the link between Ancient Roman and contemporary Spanish writers. He systematized the theoretical views on poetry that had developed in Spain over the preceding century and a half. A contemporary of Medrano was the poet and satirist, Juan del Valle y Caviedas, who sharply criticized the entourage of the viceroy of Peru. In what is present-day Colombia the poet Dominguez Camargo and the writer de la Concepción were famous.

In the architecture, sculpture, painting and applied art of New Spain and Peru the specific characteristics of the South American style are fully and clearly visible. The plan of Mexico City right down to the position of the churches and palaces was directly borrowed from the Aztec capital, Tenochtitlán. The plan of Cusco is noted for its Inca influence. Elements of Incan architecture can also be seen in this town in the shape of the building walls which broaden out towards the bottom. The basement and lower floors of the old buildings in Cusco have maintained to this day the regular Incan masonry. Even in those towns which had no direct descendants in pre-Columbian times, the axes of the urban composition, the correlation between walls and decor and various other architectural elements go back to the ancient traditions of the continent.

The Spanish style of *churrigueresque*, the picturesque and luxuriant ornamentation used on buildings, was enriched in New Spain with the addition of numerous Indian motifs. This was the beginning of the Mexican ultra-Baroque with its rich carvings and mouldings, its patterns of multi-coloured ceramics and its striving to turn orders into ornament (twisted columns, pilasters of uniquely complex configuration, etc.). A fine example of the ultra-Baroque style is to be found in the viceroy's palace in Mexico City (now the National Palace), which was built between 1692 and 1699. Among the most well-known of the local architects were the Indians, Sebastian de la Cruz and José Condori, who worked in the early 18th century in Potosí. The former built the portal of the Church of St. Francisco and the second the portal of the Church of St. Lorenzo.

On the periphery of the region of higher civilization in the territory of what is today Ecuador and Colombia where the Indian traditions in architecture had developed less strongly there is a noticeable Arab influence. The Spanish Moorish architects decorated the walls of their buildings with the characteristic geometric ornamentation.

Mexican sculpture during the 17th and 18th centuries was a stable amalgam of Spanish sculpture and Aztec plastic art. Incan influences were noted in Peruvian sculpture and it was here in the 17th century that the Indian master, Juan Thomas Tuyru Túpac, worked. In the 18th century Manuel Chile, known as Caspicara, who designed the ornamentation of the Church of Catuna, worked in Quito.

Among the prominent painters of the 17th and early 18th centuries Vázquez de Arce y Ceballos and Melchior Pérez de Holguin in the vice-regency of Peru, and Miguel Cabrera in New Spain should be named. In his painting entitled, *The Last Way* Pérez de Holguin has given the face of the suffering Christ the features of an Indian.

The ultra-Baroque style was clearly expressed in applied art—carved furniture, silver implements, ornamental ceramics and wrought iron ware.

In La Plata the Spanish and Spanish-American cultural influences came through from Peru, Chile and even directly from the metropolis. The writers of the earliest historical chronicles in la Plata were the soldier-monk, Luis de Miranda de Villafañá, who described the founding of Buenos Aires and

Domingo Martinez de Irala's expeditions to Paraguay, and Pedro Hernandez, secretary to a local governor who compiled the "Commentaries" on the conquistador, Álvaro Núñez Cabeza de Vaca. The most important cultural centre of colonial La Plata was Cordoba, which was founded in 1573.

During the second half of the 17th and the 18th centuries an important contribution to the study of the region was made by a number of South American scholars and scientists: Pedro Montenegro, a doctor and botanist, who collected a valuable herbarium of medicinal plants; Buenaventura Suárez, who published a work entitled *Lunario de un Siglo*; Pedro Lozano, a geographer, who in 1733 published in Spain a work entitled *A Horographical Description of the Lands, Rivers, Trees and Fauna of the Great Province of Chaco Gualamba*; and José Sanchez Labrador, a professor of Cordoba University, who studied botany, zoology, astronomy, physics, ethnography, history and linguistics.

The destruction of the native culture in La Plata led to the predominance there of Spanish types of folk art (decorative plate and ornamental forgings, etc.). Architecture became the most developed art form during the colonial period, but here the dominant role was played by European masters. The Church of La Compañia in Cordoba was built between 1646 and 1690 according to a design by the Belgian architect, Phillipe Lemer. The cathedral in the same town was built by José Gonzalez Merquelté, Vicente Muñoz and Andrés Bianchi, an Italian.

The culture of the Jesuit missions in Paraguay had its own unique features. To strengthen their influence over the Indians the Jesuits did not destroy the cultural traditions of the Guarani and provided their children with primary education. It was in these missions that the first printing press in La Plata began and in 1700 the first book, the *Roman Martyrology*, was published. The missions developed their own style of pictorial art which came to be called the Guarani-Jesuit style. In painting, sculpture and wood and stone-carving the influence of the native Indian art was noticeable. Not infrequently the Guarani masters gave their saints Indian faces. The Jesuits encouraged the playing of religious music and choral singing, and special workshops were set up to manufacture stringed and wind instruments.

The influence of the Indian cultures varied in different parts of the continent. On the Antilles, for example, its effect was minimal. In Brazil and on the Caribbean coast of Venezuela and Colombia it was noticeable in agriculture, in certain aspects of the building, in language (in Portuguese, for instance, there are thousands of words of Indian origin), in folklore, in literature and in dancing. In what is now the United States and Canada it enriched applied and pictorial art.

The Africans brought their music to America, their dancing, their distinctive painting and masks and their cooking. Their influence was reflected in language as well as in the general psychology of the people. This was not an accidental development, for in the Creole families black women often acted as wet-nurses and nannies to the children.

But the main influence on the cultural development of America, however, came from the Europeans. Thus on the Antilles the predominant influence came from Spanish culture which affected in particular the architectural face of the towns and the various structures like arched aqueducts.

Brazilian culture for more than two hundred years came under the enormous influence of Portuguese Jesuits. By the mid-1570s primary schools run by the Jesuits existed in Pôrto Seguro, Ilheus, San Vicente and São Paulo, while Rio de Janeiro, Recife and San Salvador had colleges as well.

Prominent among the early Brazilian scholars were the Jesuit missionary, José de Anchieta, who produced an enormous profusion of literary heritage throughout his life, the most important of which was *A Description of Natural Phenomena in San Vicente* (1580); Vicente de Salvador, who wrote *A History of the Enslavement of Brazil* (1627), and Simão de Vasconcelos, whose work *The Chronicles of the Society of Jesus and the Province of Brazil* was published in 1663. Also of interest is the *Tratado Descritivo do Brasil em 1587* (Descriptive Treatise on Brazil, 1587), which was one of the few works published at that time by a lay author. It came from the pen of Gabriel Soares de Sousa, a *fazendeiro* from Bahia and contains information on the population, economy and natural resources of Brazil. The fight against epidemics resulted in the appearance in the 17th century of a number of works devoted to medical themes, like the *Treatise on Smallpox* by Simão Pinheira and the *Treatise on Harmful Occurrences in Per-*

nambuco (by which was meant yellow fever) by João Ferreira da Rosa.

A unique personage in the colony of Brazil was the famous inventor, Bartholomeo Lorenzo de Gusmão, who constructed a guided flying vehicle which he tested in 1709.

The first signs of an awakening of national self-consciousness among the Brazilians came with the works of the poet, Gregorio de Matos (1633-1696) who was called the Brazilian Villon. In a book of verses entitled: *The Music of Parnassus* he lovingly described his native land. The satirical verses of Matos castigated the Portuguese adventurers who had got rich in Brazil, the local aristocrats and the colonial bureaucracy.

The intensive development of Brazilian architecture began in the 1690s and in the first half of the 18th century when gold and diamonds began to be mined on a large scale. An architectural school whose work was characterized by austere exteriors and magnificent fairy-tale interiors, arose along the coastal towns and took a prominent place in the development of Brazilian Baroque. A. de Matos built the Church of Capilla Dorada en Recife, Valentin de Fonseca e Silva, a mulatto, built the Monastery of San Bento in Rio de Janeiro, and M. de Cuasresma built the church of the Monastery of San Francisco in San Salvador. In 1750 the engineer, Freire Gomes de Andrade, designed and built a grandiose two-tier stone aqueduct.

São Paulo benefitted from the work of two painters, Manuel Alvarez and Belchor de Paulo, the ornamented work on the church at Belem was done by Baltasar de Campos and Charles de Belleville and the paintings in the Benedictine monastery in Rio de Janeiro were the work of Domingos Conceição da Silva and Ricardo do Pilar. Of the two sculptors, Agostinho da Piedade from Bahía and Agostinho de Jesús from São Paulo, the former was noted for his polychrome terracotta busts and the latter for his statues of madonnas.

Lay painting first came to Brazil in the late 1630s and early 1640s in the works of Frans Post, Albert Eckhut and others who were members of the entourage of the ruler of the Dutch part of the colony, Count Johann Mauritz von Nassau-Siegen. One of the earliest of such lay paintings was an 18th century canvas entitled *The First Battle of Guararapes*, the theme of which was the battle between the

Portuguese-Brazilian forces and the Dutch in 1648. It was the work of João de Deus Sepúlveda. Valentin de Fonseca e Silva, the architect and sculptor mentioned above, was also famous as a painter.

One of the first writers in the British colonies was John Smith (1580-1631). In a work entitled *The True Relation* he described the life of the colonists and the Indians. Among the writers in the southern states Hammond, Olsop and Berd deserve mention. The culture of New England came under the powerful influence of Puritan ideology. The chronicles of William Bradford, John Winthrop and others viewed historical reality from overtly reactionary positions. They defended the right to conduct a war of annihilation against the Indians, fiercely condemned the demonstrations of the poor and offered a fantastical and purely religious interpretation of contemporary events. Against this background a pamphlet written by Samuel Sewall, then chief judge of Massachusetts, and entitled *The Selling of Joseph* (1700) stands out as the first work written in the British colonies against slavery. The theological treatises of John Cotton and John Eliot were very much in vogue in New England. But these Puritanical doctrinaire attitudes were not without opposition. Thomas Hooker, Roger Williams and John Wise all spoke up against them. The best known was Williams with his pamphlet in defence of religious tolerance entitled *The Bloody Tenet of Persecution* (1644) and his first study of the Indian languages entitled *Key to the Language of America* (1643). Lay writers in New England included the satirists, Thomas Morton and Nathaniel Ward, and the poets, Michael Wigglesworth, Anne Bradstreet and Edward Taylor.

In 1647 a law was passed in Massachusetts on education which introduced public schools. In 1636 the first higher educational establishment, Harvard College, was opened, and in 1701, Yale College was founded in New Haven. Their curricula were chiefly theological and humanitarian. The focal points for the development of the natural and technical sciences were the scientific societies, the first of which, the Boston Philosophical Society, was founded in 1683.

The art brought to the New World by the Puritan colonists was extremely poor in both form and content. Painting was dominated by portraiture,

but it was a genre imbued with sober practicality and primitive superficiality. Elements of art were also found in building and the applied arts (furniture, utensils, etc.).

The culture of New France was also closely linked with the metropolis. In 1635 a college was opened in Quebec, which at the time was the first of its kind north of Mexico. In 1668 the lay authorities opened a school of applied art at St. Joachim. In the late 17th and the first half of the 18th century a number of works appeared on the past history of Canada like the *Histoire de la Nouvelle France* by Pierre Charlevoix. An important contribution to the study of the natural resources and geography of the colony was made by the French scholar Samuel de Champlain, and the Swedish scholar, Peter Kalm. During the late 17th century the French doctor and naturalist, Michel Sarrazin, lived and worked in Canada. He took part in the fight against epidemics and made a study of the flora and fauna of the St. Lawrence Valley. In 1699 he was made a corresponding member of the Academie Française. In 1750 another Canadian doctor and natural historian, Jean-François Gaultier, who made a study of botany, zoology, mineralogy and meteorology, particularly the effects of climate on health, was also made a corresponding member of the Academie Française.

The Canadian style of architecture, which adapted French architectural traditions to the conditions of the American North, was created by Jean Mailhut (1668-1753), a native of New France. The characteristic building of this style was the low, massive rural house with a steep roof. In 1670 Claude François, who had studied under Nicolas Poussin, became the first professional artist to work in Canada. On his painting *The Holy Family* alongside the traditional figures he depicted an Indian girl against the background of a Quebec cliff. The theme of Canada was given broader representation in the works of Paul Beauncour. On his canvases we find a lumberjack crushed by a falling tree, explorers shipwrecked on the St. Lawrence, and a group of people being saved after wandering lost in the frozen forests of winter. Canadian sculptors include Denis Mallet and Jacques Leblond, who in the late 17th century taught at St. Joachim, Jiles Beaulven from Trois Rivières, and the Levasseur family who worked in the 18th century. In the 17th century

Canada had its first local composer in the person of Charles Amador Martin.

The social, economic and cultural development of America from the 16th to the first half of 18th century brought into being a qualitatively new phenomenon—American Enlightenment. The Enlightenment, as an ideological trend connected with the struggle of the emerging bourgeoisie and the popular masses against feudalism, had an international character, developing in various countries from the mid-17th to the early 20th century. In the New World the Age of Enlightenment covered the period from the mid-18th to the early 19th century.

American Enlightenment experienced the influence of various political regimes. From 1750 to 1788 a policy of enlightened absolutism was practised in Portuguese and Spanish America. In Brazil this period lasted from 1750 to 1777—the reign of King Jose Manuel I in Portugal and his Prime-Minister, Marquis de Pombal. In the Spanish colonies it lasted from 1759 to 1788—the reign of King Charles III in Spain. This period saw a certain weakening in prohibitive measures against the Brazilian economy, the granting of permission for free trade and the passing of ships between all the Spanish and Spanish-American ports, the expulsion of the Jesuits (from Brazil in 1759 and from Spanish America in 1768), and a number of reforms in the sphere of culture. All of this encouraged the development of enlightened ideology. However with accession of Maria I in Portugal and Charles IV in Spain policies changed and a period of reactionary counter-reform set in.

In British America a noticeable hardening of the colonial regime began earlier, in 1763, when the Seven Years' War ended. Henceforth the British authorities tried to conserve the seigniorial structure in Canada and, considering the unrest and anti-colonial actions in the neighbouring colonies, make that country into the bulwark of its domination on the North American continent. It is interesting to note, however, that reaction could not always destroy the results of progressive reforms and, furthermore, that the policies of Maria I, Charles IV and George III only served to activate the anti-colonial forces and thereby encourage more effective propaganda for the ideas of Enlightenment.

But despite all the ups and downs of political life,

American culture in the second half of the 18th century made enormous steps forward. The acceleration of this process became noticeable by the 1720s. In 1721 the University of Caracas was founded and in 1728 the University of Havana. In 1740 the Philadelphia Academy was opened, in 1746 the College of New Jersey, in 1747 the University of Santiago, and in 1754 King's College in New York. In 1783 the Royal Seminary of Mines was founded in Mexico and the San Carlos College in Buenos Aires. In 1788 the Royal School of Surgery began its work in the capital of New Spain as did the Nautical School in the capital of La Plata in 1792. By the time of the outbreak of the War of Independence there were 9 colleges in British America and more than 20 Universities in Spanish America.

In 1731 Benjamin Franklin founded the first public library in the British colonies in Philadelphia and in 1743 the American Philosophical Society. In 1773 the Royal Academy of Fine Arts was opened in Mexico and in 1788 the first botanical garden was laid out there.

During the period of enlightened absolutism young Brazilian Creoles were allowed to study at the University of Coimbra, which had been freed from the influence of the Jesuits.

But the main innovations in culture began in Brazil in 1808 when Rio de Janeiro became the residence of the royal court, which had fled from Portugal after its invasion by Napoleon. In the year in which the Braganzas arrived in the Brazilian capital a printing house, a school for anatomy, surgery and medicine, a botanical garden and a military archive were all opened. These were followed by the opening in 1810 of a public library with 60,000 volumes, in 1811 of a military academy, in 1812 of a chemical laboratory and in 1813 of a theatre.

During the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries 11,000 books were published in New Spain. In 1722 the first newspaper in Spanish America was published in Mexico City, and in 1743 the first periodical publication came out in Peru. In 1813 the first issue appeared in Rio de Janeiro of a political and literary publication, *O Patriota*, which contained articles on Brazilian history and geography together with excerpts from the archives of the works of Brazilian scholars.

Under the undisputed influence of English (Locke and Priestley), French (Voltaire, Montes-

quieu, Diderot and Rousseau) and Spanish (Campanes and Jovellanos) Enlightenment, American Enlightenment formed one important distinctive feature—it was not only opposed to feudalism, but in spirit totally against European colonialism. This characteristic appears in the very varied career of that greatest of all American Enlighteners, who was at the same time a scholar, diplomat and politician, Benjamin Franklin. In articles published in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* (1729-1748), *Poor Richard's Almanac* (1732-1758) and the *Autobiography* Franklin described scientific discoveries, attacked religious prejudices, and showed how necessary it was to think and act according to the needs of the individual and society. In this way he opposed colonial ideology and implanted in his contemporaries a bourgeois ideology that was progressive for the American reality of his times. Thomas Paine, another opponent of colonialism, received an enormous response from public opinion for such outstanding works as *Common Sense*, *The Rights of Man* and *Age of Reason*. In response to the very real problems facing America, the author of the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson, sharply criticized slavery and condemned the barbaric annihilation of the Indians in a work entitled *Notes of Virginia* (1782).

Persons with similar views to the great North American progressive thinkers are to be found in various parts of the continent. The Argentinian philosopher, Manuel Belgrano proposed in 1796 the adoption of measures designed to promote agriculture, manufacturing, trade, education, sciences and the arts. He showed how important it was to remove all obstacles to the economic development of La Plata. His fellowcountryman, Mariano Moreno, wrote in 1802 his *Thesis* on the personal obligations of Indians in general and the Yanacones and Mitayos in particular. Later in his "Memorandum of Cattle-Breeders", which was written under the strong influence of Rousseau and other French Enlighteners, he tried to provide answers to many of the pressing economic, social and political problems facing Spanish America. He was also a strong supporter of national liberation. Other subsequent independence fighters like Juan José Castelli, Juan José Paso and Bernardo de Monteagudo shared the views of Belgrano and Moreno. Opposition to colonialism in Canada came in the early 19th century in

the writings of William Lyon Mackenzie and Louis Joseph Papineau.

Science played a most important role in the culture of the American Enlightenment, opposing as it did medieval ideas and ways of thinking and propagandizing rationalism and deism. In 1781 the Mexican scholar, Juan Benito de Gamarra wrote a work entitled *Deluding the Human Mind* in which he castigated scholasticism and for which he was brought before the court of the Inquisition. Three years later a North American Enlightener, Ethan Allen, published a paper entitled *Reason—the Only Oracle of Man*, in which he opposed a rational cognition of the laws of nature to the mythological stories of the Bible.

A characteristic feature of the American scholars of this period was their desire to study the natural resources, population and economics of the continent rather than engage in abstract problems. A number of outstanding scholars worked at the Royal Mining Seminary in Mexico including Fausto Eluyar y de Suvisa, a prominent minerologist, Andres Manuel del Río, a naturalist and chemist who had been a pupil of the famous Abraham Gottlob Werner, professor of mining at the Freiberg Mining Academy and a fellow student of Alexander Humboldt, and Antonio de León y Gama, an astronomer and engineer. New Granada produced a major botanical scholar in the person of José Celestino Mutis, whose scientific expedition continued from 1782 to his death in 1808. Mutis left behind him some 3,000 drawings of plants and a magnificent botanical library which was second only to the similar library of the President of the Royal Society in London, Sir Joseph Banks. Francisco José de Caldas, another prominent botanist and astronomer from New Granada, who had also worked with Humboldt, was executed by a Spanish punitive detachment.

Brazil produced a whole constellation of scholars, who graduated from the University of Coimbra and who made intensive studies of the vast territory of Portuguese America. Francisco de Lacerda journeyed up the Amazon and along the Paraguay and Parana rivers and determined the coordinates of many settlements; Alejandro Rodríguez Ferreira, who was famed as the Brazilian Humboldt, made valuable botanical and zoological collections from the Amazon; and José Vieira do Couto travelled

extensively throughout the capitania of Minas Gerais looking for saltpetre and cobalt deposits. José Bonifacio de Andrada e Silva, who was a prominent minerologist and metallurgist, subsequently became a politician and headed the first government of independent Brazil. The scholar and monk, José Mariano de Canceção Veloso was very well known in his time for the work he carried out on the study of the flora of south-east Brazil, as were the botanists Manuel de Arrauda y Cámara and L. do Sacramento. Ricardo Franco de Almeida Serra travelled much throughout the Mato Grosso *capitania* at the end of the 18th century when he served there as a captain in the engineers. He died at Coimbra in 1808 leaving behind him many valuable manuscripts and maps.

Like Benjamin Franklin who invented the lightning-conductor, the street-lamp and the detonator, the Latin American scholars tried to give their work as practical an application as possible. Thus the Mexican, José Antonio Alzate y Ramirez made a study of the silkworm, cochineal, flax and the scientific and technical aspects of mining. He also published a *Diario Literario de Mexico* and a *Gaceta de Literatura*. The Peruvian, José Hipólito Unanue, wrote a work entitled *Observaciones sobre el clima de Lima*, and the Venezuelan, Andrés Bello, compiled a *Gramatica de la langue castellana*. Eugenio Espejo, a doctor and Enlightener from Ecuador, spent his life in the fight against epidemics and disease. There were a number of prominent scholars and teachers including Miguel José Sáenz, who devised a new education system, Simon Rodríguez, a teacher of Bolivar, and the Columbian, Jose Félix Restrepo.

The national literatures of the continent were formed within the framework of American Enlightenment. The founding father of social and political journalism in North America was Benjamin Franklin, the first American poet of outstanding ability was Philip Freneau and the first novelist was Henry Brackenridge. A work entitled *Letters from an American Farmer* by Michel Guillaume Jean de Crèvecoeur and the writings of Benjamin Rush, which attacked slavery had considerable influence on North American literature. William Dunlap was considered the "Father of American Drama". The first Mexican novelist was Fernández de Lizardi, who was a bitter opponent of the spiritual yoke of

Spain and author of the famous *El Periquillo Sarniento*. The voice of the ordinary people, the Indians and the black slaves, was first heard in Peruvian literature in the romances of Francisco del Castillo. The works of another Peruvian, the poet Mariano Melgar (for example: *A la Libertad* and *Al Conde de Vista Florida*) are full of aspiration for national liberation. The founders of Argentine literature were the poet and dramatist Manuel José de Levar den who wrote the drama *Siripo*, the hero of which was an Indian, and the *Oda al Paraná*, a poem written to the grandeur of the River Parana; the poet Pantaleón Rivarola, whose romances reflected the struggle of the lower orders in Buenos Aires with the English interventionists in 1806-1807; and Vicente Lopez y Planes who wrote the Argentine national anthem (1812). In Brazil in the late 18th century a national society of poets, called the *Arcadia*, was formed. Its members included the "Brazilian Petrarch", Thomas Antonio Gonzaga, who wrote the love poem, *Marilha de Dirceu* and *Chilean Letters*; Cláudio Manuel da Costa, Ignacio José de Alvarenga Peixoto, Manuel Ignácio da Silva Alvarenga, José Brasilio da Gama and José de Silva Rita Durão. Melgar was shot by the royalists, and Gonzaga, Costa and Alvarenga Peixoto took part in the anti-government Inconfidencia. The first of these died in exile in Mosambique, the second committed suicide in prison while still under investigation.

The period of Enlightenment also saw the development of the national schools of pictorial art. In Brazil there was the Minas Gerais, which represented Brazilian Baroque, and whose best known representative was the mulatto architect and sculptor, Antonio Francisco Lisbõa, known by the nom de plume *Aleijadinho*. His hands had been disfigured by leprosy and he had to have his instruments fastened to his arms by means of special gloves. Alei-

jadinho designed two famous churches of San Francisco at Ouro Prêto and São João del Rei. His best work was a series of statues of the twelve prophets sculpted from a soft, light-orange stone which stand on the staircase of the Church of Bon Jesus de Matozinhos in Congonhas do Campo. A patriot and opponent of the colonial yoke, Aleijadinho gave the negative personalities of his sculptural groups the features of Portuguese bureaucrats, opposing these to the brave and fine faces of his heroes. The Cusco school in Peru is of interest. One painting of this school, for example, entitled *America Feeding Strangers*, which was the work of an unknown artist, depicts the suffering Indians and the flora and fauna of Peru. The prominent painter, José Rodriguez Rendón worked in Venezuela at the end of the 18th century, as did a century later Martin Tovar e Tovar, whose paintings were devoted to the struggle for independence.

The traditions of North American artistic culture were formed in the mid-18th century. The painters John Hesselius, John Smybert, R. Fick, John Copley and Benjamin West created expressive and authentic images of the colonists and the Indians, thereby showing their interest in the historical past and ethnography of America.

The greatest composer on the American continent was the Cuban, Esteban de Salas y Castro, whose music written in the second half of the 18th century showed African influences.

American Enlightenment ideologically paved the way to the wars of independence in both British and Spanish America, the liberation movement in Brazil and the revolt in Canada (1837-1838) which were all more or less radical, anti-colonial bourgeois revolutions. It was the most important stage in the development of national cultures in the New World.

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Chapter VIII

Indian Feudalism (7th century to the first half of the 18th Century)

The social and economic system in medieval India. The Middle Ages in India saw the domination of feudalism. But the social and economic system of medieval India had its own peculiarities, particularly the fact that feod, or feudal land passed from father to son, was by no means the dominant form of transmission. The hierarchical structure of the ruling class was weakly developed and during certain periods non-existent. Each feudal lord answered directly to the supreme ruler. Commonly, the landowner did not run his own manorial estates, because *corvée* did not exist. Forced, unpaid labour known as *begar* was normally only practised in the building of castles and irrigation systems, etc. Revenue from the peasants was normally levied in the form of a fixed state tax.

The monarch, as a rule gave out land as a reward for services, usually of a military nature. From the mid-16th century a landowner was not given a specific piece of land, but a general area from which certain sums were to be levied as state tax. The tax department determined how much each area of land should provide, but the land was not always given to one owner for his lifetime and could be exchanged by the tax department for any other piece of land that was equal in value in another part of the country. Henceforth the man who was given the land collected taxes for his own use, but was obliged to maintain armed soldiers and these formed part of the monarch's total army. Neither estates nor titles were hereditary. Also in India there was no serfdom in the sense of the juridical personal dependence of the peasants on their feudal land owner. The feudal

lord could only make use of the courts and punishments when engaged in the collection of taxes. Estate barriers in India were replaced with caste barriers. The absence of hereditary estates and titles in India during certain periods of its history made it easier for able people to rise up from the ranks and become military commanders for which they were given allotments of land.

The Indian form of feudalism differed from the European both in the predominance of state ownership of the land and the continued existence throughout most of the country up to the present day of a rural community based on a caste system. But at the same time nowhere in the Indian historical sources is there any document establishing the monarch's ownership of the land. By Indian law the ruler collected taxes only because he defended the land from foreign invasion. However, in practice this state tax was levied in such amounts as to make it a feudal rent, whose collection the ruler granted to his military commanders. State ownership of the land never gave the treasury the right to dispose of this land. It is interesting to note, however, for all the domination of state ownership, a certain small part of the land was owned by hereditary independent or vassal landowners (under the Moghuls known as *zamindars*) who set the size of their own rents and at times ran their holdings with the help of bondserfs and day-labourers.

The economic unit was the small family, but it could only exist by being part of the larger rural collective or community in which the system known as *jajmani* (the mutual, but unequal exchange of ser-

vices) existed. This kind of community was based on caste and every caste had its traditional occupation.

In medieval India the term "land" meant two completely different things.

For the landowner the land meant a particular field, which he worked without losing his rights over it even after long absence from use. It could be bequeathed or alienated through sale or gift with due regard, of course, for certain traditional community limitations. For this allotment of land he would pay a fixed rent or tax to the state to whomsoever the supreme ruler had entrusted the right to collect taxes.

For the feudal lord or the feudal state the land meant an area whose population was required to pay a fixed amount of tax. These lands, as mentioned before, could be scattered over various parts of India. During the period of developed feudalism in India the overwhelming majority of estates were granted conditionally: they could not be bequeathed, or alienated, or split among smaller owners. The feudal lord did not interfere in the peasant's running of the land, but insofar as taxes were only levied from the cultivated area, the feudal lord tried to increase the amount of arable land, granting over the course of several years tax privileges to peasants who increased the amount of fallow or virgin land and encouraging those who sowed intensive, highly marketable crops, even though the taxation on these was higher.

Unlike medieval Europe, in the East in general and in India in particular money-commodity relations were highly developed. Even in the villages there were markets where goods not produced locally could be acquired, for example, salt, coconuts, etc. The most convenient internal highway in the country was the Ganges with all its numerous tributaries. Coastal shipping or caravans brought goods south from Bengal. The trade routes crossed the Deccan following paths that mainly lay along the great rivers. Foreign goods came to the interior of the country from the major ports.

In the first century A.D. Indian merchant settlements first made their appearance in many of the Far Eastern countries like today's Malaysia, Indonesia and Indochina. The coastline of India itself contained numerous towns like Bhregukachkha (Bharuch), Suratha (Surat), Shurparaka, Uraïur

and Kanchipuram. Large towns also existed on the main caravan routes like Takshashila, Shakala and Purushapura in the Punjab; Kanyakubja (Kanauj) and Sthaneshvara (Thanesar) in Northern India; Ujaini in Central India; and Vatapi, Tagara, Madurai, Paithan and others in Southern India. These towns were all centres of trade and handicrafts, although many of their inhabitants worked on the land, tilling the soil or tending cattle. The merchants organized influential corporations which played a highly important role in the economic and political life of the country. According to the historical sources the merchants were superior to the craftsmen. They frequently acquired land, most probably through purchase, and made rich presentations to the temples. Urban life at the beginning of the Middle Ages was never interrupted.

Even in ancient times there existed in India such forms of feudal exploitation as serf labour, on the one hand, and estates granted by the monarch for services to the state, on the other. In the 6th and 7th centuries the number of bronze tablets indicating this kind of grant grew considerably. These tablets are interesting insofar as through them we can trace the development of feudal relations. There are also documents listing an increasingly larger number of taxes exacted from the people. The formula of immunity, i.e., the prohibition to trespass the granted territory of *chata* and *bhata* (evidently, to official persons and military detachments). The feudal lord had the right to administer justice, and more and more frequently the peasants found themselves in increasing feudal dependence. Frequently rich feudal lords, who judging from their titles acted as something like provincial governors, made grants of land themselves without waiting for the sanction of the suzerain. Sometimes such grants were made in the name of the suzerain, but at the request of a petty feudal.

Another indicator of the development of feudal relations in India was the change in the position of the towns. Until the 13th and even in some cases the 16th century the towns, particularly the ports of southern India, enjoyed extensive autonomy. The town council, on which sat the heads of the most influential and rich castes who were usually merchants, but occasionally craftsmen like copper-smiths and butter makers, not only controlled law and order and decided lawsuits, but also levied mar-

ket taxes and taxes on the craftsmen, the amounts of which it decided quite independently. The city administration could give to the temples not only the profits from the market taxes or from the craftsmen, but also part of the land belonging to the town which was not, as it said in the inscriptions, "set aside for houses". The town council was made up of people from different castes and its authority was to a certain extent autonomous. But even during the period of the greatest urban flourishing they still came under the power of the feudal lord. There are references in the sources to the fact that representatives of the state administration also lived in the towns and in certain matters they had the final word. Urban philosophy and literature show the beginnings of individualist and humanist tendencies that found expression in the *Bhakti* movement, which were spread across southern India since the 6th century, where the greatest amount of trade and the largest number of ports were to be found. Later the *Bhakti* movement in its Vishnuist form spread to Bengal. Feudalism in India in many respects differed from the European "norm", having its own specific stages of development.

The periodization of Indian feudalism. For the sake of convenience we divide the social and economic history of feudalism in India into three periods. The first lasted approximately from the 6th to the 12th century. This was a period of political fragmentation with state formations continually replacing each other. It was a time when one locality might at one time be the centre of a small principality, at another have its power extended over a much larger area and at another still break up and become part of another empire. This continual change in state borders went on for several centuries. At the same time both feudal relations and the system of state administration developed. It was then that different languages appeared and pre-national communities were formed. The same Hinduist ideas existed, but the gods less and less personified the forces of nature and more and more took on human features. Buddhism, and with it the influence of Indian ideas, spread through South-East Asia and the Far East including Japan, while in India itself that religion began to be ousted by other faiths. Through the Indian merchant settlements Hinduism also reached South-East Asia and those lands which subsequently became Indonesia and

Indochina. During this period there were various invasions from the north and in the early 13th century an independent sultanate was set up in Delhi.

The establishment of the Delhi Sultanate marks the beginning of the second period of Indian medieval history—the 13th to the early 16th century. The Sultanate of Delhi became increasingly powerful and eventually took control over the whole of northern and central India and Bengal. It also undertook a number of successful expeditions into southern India. Subsequently in the south-west of India and in the Deccan the Bahmani dynasty who came originally from the Delhi Sultanate, formed a state, which in its turn later broke up into a number of principalities. The ruling circles in Delhi and in the Deccan principalities that were formed after the break up of the Bahmani state, were Muslims, and a considerable part of the population of these areas, albeit due to compulsion, were Muslims also. With the coming of Islam to India there came a new outlook, new principles of state government and a new culture and architecture. India now became part of the Muslim world, which brought about significant changes, although life in the countryside with its rents and taxes and belief in Hinduism went on much as before. A long period of coexistence between the Hindus and Muslims resulted in a certain amount of interpenetration of their respective philosophies, making it possible to speak of a specific Indian Islam. The forms of feudalism also changed. Finally the Delhi state also weakened and collapsed, a victim to the conquerors from Moghulistan, (now Central Asia) who in the second quarter of the 16th century founded the Moghul Empire in Northern India.

In the period of its greatest expansion the Moghul Empire covered almost the whole of India with the exception of the far south and brought to that country the highest stage in its feudal development. Under the Moghuls India became one of the richest countries in the world. The works of its craftsmen were known throughout the whole East (particularly valued were the Indian printed cloths). Agriculture flourished and the population of the country, according to approximate calculations, reached 100 million. Rich trading towns sprung up. The diamond mines of Golconda became famous throughout the world. The royal court lived in immeasurable luxury. Buildings went up that contempora-

ries rapturously described as "wonders of the world". Art, miniature painting and court poetry flourished. But at the same time the mass of the people lived in poverty and taxes increased. This resulted in sporadic but increasingly frequent outbreaks of famine which devastated whole areas. The domestic policies of the rulers became increasingly harsh which led to uprisings and revolts. In a number of provinces national states were formed that were hostile to the Moghul Empire. At the same time the oppressive measures that were used to put down the growing number of national movements resulted in internal wars with the Marathi, the Afghans, the Sikhs, the Jats and the Rajputs. All this drained the state treasury and brought about the ruination of many areas.

European expansion in India. The wealth of India inevitably attracted the European trading companies and in 1498 the Portuguese arrived there. They discovered that there was no market there for European goods, but their military technology was so far ahead of that of the Indians that they were able to take by force what they couldn't buy. Every attempt at resistance by the Indians was met by naval bombardment of the ports and coastal villages. The Portuguese would then land soldiers who plundered and burned the villages, killed the people, cut down the palm groves and destroyed everything that they couldn't take away. On the coast they formed their small enclaves, but made no attempt to penetrate into the interior. They established a monopoly on naval trade between India and the West, mercilessly seizing and destroying all non-Portuguese trading vessels and drowning their crew and passengers. Later, in the early 17th century the Dutch, the English, the French and the Danes appeared in India. The approach of these countries was not to invade, but to request permission of the Moghul rulers for rights to trade and settle along the coast. But once they had established themselves they resisted all attempts on the part of the Moghuls to get rid of them. A permanent struggle took place between the powerful European companies which had their own settlements on Indian soil and their own armies and navies. In the 18th century Portugal lost its power and became itself part of the Spanish monarchy. Henceforth the Portuguese in India virtually disappeared from the scene. The Dutch turned their main attention to

Indonesia, being content like the Danes to leave India with nothing more than a few trading stations. This left the English and the French as the main European rival powers. In the 18th century trade wars broke out between them in the course of which they both supported their various pretenders among the various Indian principalities. Thus trading rivalry developed into a struggle for Indian territory. This stage ended in 1757 with the English conquest of Bengal. The whole of India now gradually passed into British hands.

Feudal relations in India still existed, but the revenues provided by feudal exploitation, were now at the disposal of the English capitalist state and the British made more and more laws in their own interest with little concern for the interests of the Indian nobility. Thus the collapse of the Moghul Empire, which helped the English to seize power in India, was not a stage in the cyclic development of the feudal state, but a transition to a new colonial period in India's history.

The early medieval states. This was a period dominated by political fragmentation with even the more powerful state formations lasting only a relatively short time. The last flourishing empire of ancient times, the Gupta Empire, was subsequently remembered as the golden age in India. This empire, which had become gradually weaker from the late 5th century on, finally collapsed through the frequent invasions of the Ephthalites (White Huns). By 530 the Ephthalites had control not only of the north-west of India, but also Malawa and the Jamuna-Ganges plane as far as present-day Gwalior. Although several years later the rulers of northern India were able to inflict defeat on the Ephthalites, the tribes which came to India with them and settled here left a considerable mark on the history of the country. These included the Gujar, who settled in the Punjab, Sind and Rajputana and some of whom got as far as Malawa and the province that was later named after them, Gudjarat. Intermining between the Ephthalites, the Gujar and the local population produced an ethnic community, later called the *Rajputs*. (The word *Rajput* is very complex signifying a people, a tribe and a caste.)

During the 7th century, at a time when relations between the Rajputs who had conquered the land and the local population were reaching a state of stability, feudal relations first began. In the 8th cen-

ture the Rajputs expanded into the richer provinces that lay along the Ganges Valley and Central India. For many centuries the Rajputs remained a close ethnic unit. They formed a type of feudal relations which differed from that in other parts of the country having a more developed feudal hierarchy and a vassal psychology.

By the end of the 6th century there were three major states contending for power in northern India: Gauda (Northern and Western Bengal), the Maukhari state (Doab and the central stream of the Ganges) with its capital at Kanauj, and finally Pushnabhuti (Lower Doab and the region where present-day Delhi stands) with its capital at Stkhaneshvar. One of the rulers of Pushnabhuti, Harshavardhana or Harsha, succeeded in virtually gaining control of the whole of northern India, including Bengal. Harsha's state was the last large empire to embrace vast areas of continental India until the 13th century. In all the lands under his rule taxes were set at one-sixth of the harvest. State revenues were also increased through internal and market duties.

Harsha changed his religion from Shivaism to Buddhism. He put a lot of energy and resources into the building of Buddhist monasteries. During his reign the large Buddhist university at Nalanda (near today's Patna) at which thousands of students lived and studied became famous even beyond the borders of India. The buildings of this monastery-university were multi-storied and covered together with the functional buildings a considerable area. But Buddhism at that time was in decline with the people tending to worship the Brahmin gods, Shiva, Vishnu and Surya (the Sun).

The Harsha Empire lasted for some thirty years. After his death it fell apart and for the following few centuries India was fragmented into numerous states that were continually fighting among themselves, making temporary alliances and once again fighting each other.

The main combatants in southern India were the Chalukyas from Vatapi, the Pallava dynasty and the Pandya dynasty. The Pandyas gradually built up a powerful navy and in this way even held today's Sri Lanka for short periods.

The Pallavas exercised enormous influence on Indian culture. Along the coast of Mahabalipuram they built numerous temples out of the solid rock,

and the architectural style for religious buildings which was developed there with ornamental sculptural groups and bas-reliefs subsequently spread throughout the whole Deccan. It also had great influence on the style of South-East Asian art, since the Pallava state conducted a lot of seaborne trade and there were large settlements of merchants from southern India in today's Kampuchea and Indonesia. The Chalukya state lasted until the mid-8th century when it was conquered by the Rashtrakutas from Maharashtra. For almost two centuries the Rashtrakutas ruled the Deccan and they made frequent incursions into northern India. They immortalized themselves by building the famous Temple of Kailas at Ellora (near to present-day Aurangabad).

The struggle between the Pallavas and the Pandyas weakened both states, just as continued wars in the north of India undermined the power of the Rashtrakutas. Here the Chola dynasty who were Tamils came to the fore. The fall of the Rashtrakutas allowed the Cholas to dominate India for two centuries. They were unable to conquer western India, but they took today's Sri-Lanka, where they established themselves so firmly that part of the present-day population of Sri Lanka are Tamils. In 1025 after a long drawn-out struggle the Cholas took part of the state of Sri Wichaiya which ruled Sumatra, part of Java and the South Malay peninsula, but subsequently they were driven out. The Cholas possessed a powerful army and navy and were fabulously rich. Their rule has left behind it a number of magnificent temples (as for example at Chidanbaram) and numerous bronze statuettes of the gods. By the early 12th century the Chola Empire covered almost the whole of southern India to the south of the Krishna and Tungabhadra rivers.

But feudalization aided the collapse of the Chola Empire. Independent principalities had grown up around this state, which, though subject to the Cholas, nevertheless, waged war among themselves and concluded alliances with each other without the sanction of the central government. In the south of India the Yadavas from Devagiri grew strong and during the first half of the 13th century their state covered all the territory of the Deccan between the Krishna and the Narbada rivers. So also did the Hoysalas from Dvarasamudra and the Kakatiyas

India

from Warangal and Pandiya in South Tamil Nadu.

Greater fragmentation occurred in northern India which could not for this reason stand up against the invasion of the Muslims from Horasan which began in the 11th century. Of the local principalities all that was left in the 12th century was the large state of the Senas of Bengal. The establishment of the State of Delhi with its Muslim leaders created a new political situation in India.

The Indian Commune. While the political scene was characterized by a kaleidoscopic change of states and the continuous waging of wars, the social and economic life of Indian society saw the long and gradual process of feudalization. It developed along two lines: on the one hand there were changes in the position of the agricultural commune, on the other the nature of the feudal estates and the rights of the feudal lord over the population changed. Towns sprung up and grew wealthy.

The Indian rural commune was not, like the Russian *mir* and the Balkan *zadruga*, a village council composed of equally dependent peasants. From ancient times the rural commune had been a farming clan in which the higher caste heads of the peasant households owned the land and the work was done by the ordinary members who included people who were dependent on the householders but of a lower caste and slaves. Among the latter there would be a number of craftsmen, since a number of crafts that were essential to village life like tanning leather for shoes and harnesses were forbidden to the householder by caste injunctions. All inter-communal matters were decided by the council of householders, which controlled the distribution of land and resolved local squabbles and litigation. In southern India a commune might extend over a whole province (like the Tamils' Nadu). In Karnataka these large communes were referred to by their local names plus a figure, as, for example, Bevola 300 and Chirapi 12, etc. Scholars are still in dispute over the meaning of these figures, but the most probable explanation is that they represented or approximated to the number of holdings that came within the jurisdiction of a particular commune, or that they were the number of commune councils which the commune comprised. In northern India the commune was evidently not so large or influential, but still included several villages (*grama*) or smaller inhabited places (*kona*, *pataka*, etc.). Full members of

the commune enjoyed a certain respect like people of a higher rural caste and had a number of rights and privileges. The possession of land holdings was affirmed (particularly in Bengal) in the presence of the whole population, including the very lowest castes. In the text of the charters special reference was made to the *mahataras*, or "respected people" of the commune, by which is meant the householders from whom the elders and the scribes were chosen.

The communes, particularly those in southern India, organized their own administration and defence. They provided help for the rural holdings, built irrigation works and took part in the feudal conflicts. They carved their proclamations on stone tablets, which were on occasion set into the temple walls. The revenue for this was collected by way of communal taxes which were sometimes as much as the state taxes. Gradually as feudalization increased, the large communes began to lose their autonomy and turn into ordinary administrative units which came increasingly under the control of bureaucrats appointed from above. As a result, the position of the commune landholders in the caste hierarchy dropped. The final break up of the large communes into small ones comprising one or two villages seems to have taken place in the 13th and 14th centuries.

Division of land amongst the commune members was fixed. Repartitioning was not the rule and did not affect the ownership rights of the holder over his share of the commune land, which he could not alienate. The full commune member had his fields, could use them as he wished, bequeath them and even buy or sell land, although the alienation of land was strictly under the control of the commune. Non-arable land belonged to the commune as a whole and no land-tax was levied on it. Rural craftsmen and their upkeep by the commune are mentioned in the sources from the 11th century onwards. Since changes in the commune had no effect on its position as a populated area providing feudal rent, the feudal lords did not interfere in village affairs.

The development of feudalism. On the other hand, more and more land was granted out in holdings, and those who received this land acquired greater rights in relation to both the central powers and the population dependent upon them. The

overwhelming majority of the charters that have come down to us from the 7th to the 12th centuries tell of such gifts bestowed upon Brahmins so as to increase the religious services of the ruler. These grants were not recorded on palm leaves (the usual writing material in southern India), but on bronze tablets and have therefore been preserved. A few documents registering the granting of land holdings to lay persons have also been preserved and these are of the same type as those granting land to the Brahmins.

The titles of the various chiefs, as listed in charters—rulers, regional and provincial governors, etc.—point to the presence of a relatively developed feudal administration, particularly in Bengal. In the north these administrative persons were considerably fewer in number—very likely because the vassals there were far more independent.

More and more frequently the landowners possessed administrative and judicial immunity. Not infrequently the state bureaucrats were forbidden to enter the territory of an estate which had been granted. The state reserved for itself the right to pass judgement only in the event of major crimes for which the death penalty was mandatory, while the remaining “ten punishments”, which were recognized under the law, could be meted out by those who had received land. Sometimes, particularly in the 12th century, the feudal lord even conducted the distribution of the commune taxes. In this way the population in the granted lands increasingly began to depend on their feudal lord.

Taxes rose, particularly in the 10th century. The charters mention taxes for marriage, those who have no children, holidays and family celebrations in the owners house. There were other taxes to pay on such things as the delivery of a royal decree to the villages; levies to upkeep bureaucrats coming to the village; legal fines and customs duties, etc. Frequent “ordering” of the smaller taxes was carried out, such as bringing them together as one basic tax, but even when this was done additional taxes began subsequently to be thought of. All this reflected the growth of the tax burden for the population and the increasingly worsening position of the commune dwellers in relation to the authorities. And as the tax burden increased, so did the various forms of compulsive labour. Commune members had to maintain bridges and roads in order, provide ser-

vices for officials visiting the village and take part in various kinds of building.

The richest among the feudal landowners with the exception of the rulers themselves were the temples and the monasteries. All matters relating to the administration of these Brahmin-controlled villages were decided by the *sabha*, or Brahmin council. This council also decided, usually irrevocably, all matters relating to the distribution of rent. The *sabha* was considered much higher in its caste position than the village commune council, although the Brahmin estates were often so fragmented among heirs that they were frequently smaller in size than those of the commune.

Although lands were granted to the temples “for as long as the sun and the moon should shine” and that all those that should encroach upon such land were held accursed, it was a not infrequent historical fact, especially during the troubled times of dynastic change or foreign conquest, that the estates not only of the lay feudal lords but also of the Brahmin communes and temples would be confiscated by the state. Therefore the relationship between the state and private feudal property was continually changing.

During this time also merchant corporations began to appear in the towns, taking over whole trading areas. Such, for example, was the corporation of merchants in the town of Aiyavola. Their influence spread over many parts of southern India and even as far as the trading posts of Indian merchants in South-East Asia, although the centre of the corporation—known as the Council of 500 *Swami*—was in the town of Aiyavola in southern India. A similar organization was the *Manigramam* with its centre in present-day Kerala. Its activities covered not only India, but Egypt, Arabia and South-East Asia. Members of a merchant guild with its centre in Penukonda formed the main part of the city council in 18 towns. There were also other similar organizations.

The caste system. Religion in medieval India. The caste system lay at the basis of the social organization of Indian society during this period. Since ancient times society had been divided into four *varnas* or social estates. Each *varna* in turn was divided into various different *jats*, castes. Each of these groups which differed from the other whether by virtue of its occupation, customs or religious

faith, formed a special caste, was believed to possess a certain degree of "purity" and "impurity" and stood in a complex hierarchical relationship with the other castes. As time passed the composition of the *varna* changed. The Brahmins more and more often began to be landowners, bureaucrats and military commanders as well as priests, while the *Rajput*-landowners began to consider themselves *kshatriya*, members of the governing and military caste. In southern India there were virtually no *kshatriya varna*: here it was the *shudra* that formed the military and landowning castes. The very status of the *shudra varna* increased with landowning commune members becoming *shudra* and from the first centuries A. D. some of the craftsmen. Merchants and rich craftsmen would claim the title of *vaishya*.

On the whole the caste system corresponded to the class divisions of society and gave them religious sanction. The rich and influential strata occupied the highest caste positions, while the lowest socioeconomic groups belonged to the lower castes. Should individuals or whole clans move up the social ladder, becoming rich landowners or successful military commanders, or even monarchs, then they, or at least their descendents, would be given the higher caste positions, usually *kshatriya*. The *shudra* groups who were merchants ultimately became *vaishya*.

At the same time, however, it was possible to slip down the caste ladder. During this period the caste system was not as rigid as it later became. Primarily the caste system served to conserve the existing social system, but in times of change it could adapt to it.

In medieval India religion played a very great role. This period was characterized by the decline of Buddhism and the increasing domination of Hinduism. Some students of Indian history believe that Buddhism was linked with the domination of the *kshatriya*, who stood at the head of the great empires, and with the highly ramified system of monasteries and shrines, and could not adapt to the more exclusive economic activity of early medieval India. In the south of India the decline of Buddhism was noted as early as the 8th century, whereas in the north it appears to have lasted until the 12th.

This change of religion did not occasion any similar change in the way of life. Hinduism contains numerous sects and orientations differing according to

both the choice of god from the enormous Hindu pantheon and to the type of rites and customs practised. But certain concepts remain common for all Hindus. The highest virtue is the fulfilment of one's *dharma*, or duty, which in effect means the unflinching performance of one's caste obligations. For the highest castes this means being courageous and just, while for the lower castes this means total devotion to the higher castes. According to the beliefs of Hinduism the soul does not die and on the death of the body is transformed into another being, higher or lower, according to one's conduct in the preceding life. Belief in the doctrine of *ahimsa* (avoidance of harm to all living creatures) was common to all Hindus as well as the concomitant worship of a number of animals, particularly the cow. Also common, although differing in details, were the rituals that were carried out for numerous reasons throughout a man's life from the cradle to the grave. All Hindus had to bring sacrifices, mainly in the form of fragrances and flowers, sacrifice to the Brahmins and the temples, revere various ascetics and hermits as holy men and, most important of all, observe the caste rituals and obey the caste prohibitions. This latter was ranked equally as important as the worship of the gods.

The two most extensively worshiped gods in the Hindu religion were Vishnu and Shiva. The cult of Shiva also involved the worship of his wife, who was known in various parts of India under various names: Kali, Uma, Parvati and Shakta. Kali was depicted in the form of a savage goddess who demanded bloody sacrifice, while Uma and Parvati were represented in the form of a loving mother. In this form numerous different cults were merged together.

The cult of Shakta was very widespread, especially among the lower castes. Shakta was seen as an emanation of the divine nature of Shiva and the worship of Shakta was connected with tantrism—a trend in Hinduism distinguished from the others by its holy texts, known as *tantras*, and by its worship of a mainly female divinity and with its behavioural requirements that differ from orthodox Hinduism. Elements of mysticism, witchcraft and incantation played an important role in tantrism.

But most important was the spread in southern India in the 6th century of *Bhakti ideas* (all-consuming love for God before which ritual, asceti-

cism and Brahmin orthodoxy lose their importance). Basava, who in the 12th century founded the Lingayats-Shivaites sect (so named from their worship of Shiva's symbol, the lingam or phallus), combined the ideas of *Bhakti* with tantrism, rejecting the principle of the caste structure which was fundamental to Hinduism. He insisted not so much on the observance of ritual as on the need to love Shiva, but at the same time he recognized the value of asceticism. In the 12th and 13th centuries the Lingayats waged an open struggle with official Hinduism and Jainism. From the 7th to the 11th centuries *Bhakti* ideas penetrated the Vishnuites and subsequently began to be preached in Bengal. Since the *Bhakts* (who followed *Bhakti*) rejected the ritual element of Hinduism and the privileges of the Brahmins, their teaching contained notes of social protest.

From the 6th to the 10th century the coastal towns of India, particularly the big ports, saw mass adherence to the religion of Jainism. Many Jainist temples were built and huge statues to the *tirthankara*, the mentors of Jainism. This religion had particularly great influence among the Tamils. But as early as the 7th century the *Bhakts* fought against Jainism and over the centuries the latter gradually gave ground to Hinduism. Jainism remained only strong in Gujarat, but small Jainist communities—mainly of merchants and usurers—lingered on in many Indian towns.

Culture. 6th-10th century. During this period the six classical systems of Indian philosophy, which had made their appearance back in ancient times, were finally established. These were: *nyaya*, *vaisheshika*, *sankhya*, *yoga*, *mimamsa* and *vedanta*. They all recognized the authority of the Vedas and each system made its contribution to knowledge and thought, although these ideas were cloaked in religious and mystical garb. In addition, during the same period, there also existed the Buddhist philosophical schools of the Madhyamika and the Vijnana-Veda, which denied the reality of the world and knowledge and even God as the creator of the world. The *Charvaki* preached a materialist philosophy, denying the existence of the soul since it was impossible to prove its existence separate from the body. For the same reasons the *Charvaki* also denied the existence of the absolute spirit, or God.

During the late 8th and early 9th centuries the *advaita-vedanta* philosophical system of Shankara

(788-820) gained wide acceptance. This system called for a return to the ancient teaching of the Upanishads, for the recognition of God as the only reality and for the world to be considered as nothing more than an illusion, which only the ignorant believe in. Shankara was not only a philosopher, but also a religious reformer. He built four monasteries and reformed the ascetic *sanyasi* community.

In the 11th century Ramanuja simplified the *vedanta* system making it accessible to ordinary people. According to the theory, God created the world from material, time and spirit, the three substances that were separate from God himself. Love and devotion to God did not depend on the caste of a believer and they were more important than great knowledge of the holy texts. God was not an indifferent creator, he was concerned about the fate of each man and answered his prayers. Ramanuja's philosophy lay at the basis of the beliefs of many of the *vedanta* sects.

Science during this period continued to develop on principles that were established back in antiquity. Great advances were made in mathematics, astronomy and medicine as well as in agriculture, building and medical treatment.

Although literature continued to be written in Sanskrit, this became increasingly more esoteric as more and more the local languages began to be used. This new literature was partly transpositions of epic works from the Sanskrit (for example, the translation of the *Ramayana* by Bhuddha Reddi in the 13th century into the Telugu language), but also contained many original works, particularly in the Tamil language. The main works of the period—the *Kural* (couplets) of Tiruvalluvar and the ethical poems *Shilappadikaram* and *Manimekalai* were apparently written not later than the 6th century, but in the 8th and the 9th centuries the poetry of the *Bhakti* became widespread. This poetry praised the mythical union of man and God in the form of the love of a young man for a young girl. The hymns of the Alvars and Nayanars (the Vishnu and Shiva *Bhakti* preachers) which were renowned for the lyricism were sung as folk songs.

The first prosaic works to appear in Sanskrit were in the genre known as the "framed novellas", i.e. stories that were linked by a single theme. Examples of these works were the *Kadambari* of

Banu, a tale of two lovers who lived twice on earth in different forms, and the satirical novel of Dandin entitled the *Adventures of the Ten Princes* which pokes fun at the high officials, the ascetics and even the gods. Another example was the *Dhurtakhyana* ("The Story of Thieves") of Haribhadra which was written in the 7th-8th centuries.

A new genre was the heroic poem of Chand Bardai (1126-1196) written in Hindi and called the *Prithi-Raj-Rasau*, where in the tone of a panegyric he describes the struggle between Prince Prithi-Raj Chauhan and the Muslim invaders.

In architecture rock-cut temples became very common (at Ellore, Elephanta and later at Ajanta) or temples hewn out of monolithic rock, as at Mahabalipuram and Konarak. They were built like sculptures with all that was unnecessary being cut away. At Ajanta the rock-cut temples belonged to the Buddhists, but at Ellore they also belonged to the Indians and Jaini. These temples were ornamented with bas-reliefs, sculptures and wall-paintings. The most famous multi-figured bas-reliefs were the "Descent of the Ganges" at Mahabalipuram (7th century) and the "Ravana Shaking Mt. Kailas" at Ellore.

In the 9th century temples began to be built from hewn rock. In the north they were of parabolic (elongated oval) form with their roofs covered with a stone shield in the form of a lotus. In the south they were pyramidal in shape. Their interiors were low and dark and ingress was not permitted to everyone. Most of the faithful had to be content with walking round the temple on the outside. In the courtyard of the temples and on their steps stood sculptures depicting scenes from the epics or symbolic interpretations of the worship of the god to whom the temple was dedicated. As time passed the sculptures became so many, particularly in the south of India, that every stone looked like a piece of jewelry and the temples served as a pedestal for them—the sculptures filled everything from top to bottom to the extent that the eye could no longer take in individual scenes and figures. In the 14th century the former liveliness and variety began to disappear, replaced by canonical requirements. In the Tamil regions the art of bronze casting was widespread, the finest of these statuettes being the *Shiva as Nataraja* ("Shiva, Dancing, Creates the World") which were repeated many times with few

variations. The frescoes of the 8th century disappeared. The art of the classic dance of worship was retained only in the south of India.

The formation of the Sultanate of Delhi. The Arabs who took Sind in the early 8th century did not affect the history of the whole of India, but in the 9th century India became the arena for a number of devastating invasions by the Turkic Muslim tribes who fought under the banner of a holy war with the infidels. Mahmud, the ruler of Ghazni, systematically invaded India from 1001 to 1026, plundering and destroying the temples, seizing the treasures that had been stored up by the Indian rajahs over many decades, forcing the population to pay tribute and retreating with caravan-loads of booty. He got as far as Somnatha (Kathiawar) in the west and Kanauj on the Ganges in the east, but his possessions were only increased with the addition of the Punjab. In the late 12th century India began to be invaded by the rulers of the Ghur principality. Mohammed Ghori took possession of the whole Yamuna-Ganges Valley. After his death, Kutb-ud-din Aibak, who had been the commander of his guards (all of whom were slaves) and governor of northern India, declared himself in 1206 the independent sultan of the Ghuri Indian possessions. Thus began the sultanate of Delhi. In 1210 Kutb-ud-din was succeeded by Illtutmish, a *gulam* or slave-guard, and the remaining dynasty were known as *gulams*.

During his reign India was invaded by Mongols, who had already conquered the whole of Central Asia from Manchuria to Turkestan and who were in pursuit of Jalal-ud-din, the son of the Shah of Khorezm who had been defeated by them. Illtutmish refused Jalal-ud-din help and so the latter plundered the north of India and left. But the threat of fresh Mongol invasions hung over India for a long time and united the Muslim nobility behind the throne of Delhi.

The Domination of the Muslim Military in northern India. It was during the reign of Illtutmish that the Muslim military established their domination over the north of India. The military nobility consisted mainly of Turks from Central Asia, who had formed a powerful organization known as the "Forty" (from the number of its founders). The bureaucracy and the priesthood were *khurasans* (i. e. Tajiks and Persians). The state religion was the Sunnite version of Islam and the Indian population

was looked upon as despicable infidels (*zimmis*). The state language was Persian.

The first two sultans of Delhi were elected by the military commanders, but Illtutmish tried to make the monarchy hereditary, making his daughter, Raziya, his heir, since he considered her a "better man" than his sons. As a ruler she was brave and clever, but the military commanders considered it shameful to take orders from a woman and four years later she was killed. After several years of discord Balban (1265-1287) became the ruler. He drove off the Mongols who during the times of discord had made several incursions into India and built a chain of fortresses on the north-west border of the country. His reign witnessed a bitter struggle to strengthen royal power with the merciless stamping out of revolts and the crushing of the might of the "Forty". After his death the Khilji dynasty came to power.

The most prominent representative of this dynasty was the Sultan Ala-ud-din (1296-1316). Before his election to the throne he had invaded the Deccan and plundered it of its treasures. Cruel and determined, he was a successful military commander and a capable administrator. The increasingly frequent incursions of the Mongols led Ala-ud-din to throw the whole weight of his forces against them. Fearing a revolt among the Mongols who had settled close to Delhi and who served in the Delhi army, he slaughtered 30,000 of them in one night. To increase the state treasury he confiscated or taxed the lands of the priesthood and the rich military commanders. In a bid to get personal control over the land Ala-ud-din put an end to the granting of estates to the soldiers (*iktadars*) and gave them monetary payments instead. Since the country's economy was predominantly natural, extraordinary measures had to be taken to lower food prices for its poorly paid army. All state lands in Doab were ordered to pay their taxes in nothing but grain and the merchants were forced to bring it to huge specially constructed barns in Delhi. The prices in the markets in the capital and the rest of Doab were strictly controlled. Officials were appointed to inspect this procedure and the punishments for deception or giving short measures were harsh. The amount of tax on Indians was raised from a quarter of the harvest to one half, while the Muslim soldiers received pay increases. These measures made it

possible for the sultan to form an enormous army of 475,000 cavalry and repel the Mongol invasions.

But Ala-ud-din still had insufficient resources to maintain this army, so he sent his general, Malik Kafur, to plunder the Deccan. Kafur undertook a number of successful expeditions which took him to the southernmost extremity of India, Cape Komorin, and he brought enormous wealth in gold, jewels and horses back to Delhi. But for all these measures the sultan's actions brought about a collapse of the economy which in turn led to discontent and revolt. After several palace coups the Tughluk dynasty came to the throne and all the economic reforms of Ala-ud-din were repealed.

The most famous representative of this dynasty was Mohammed ben Tughlak (1325-1351). Though a capable and educated commander, he was a petty tyrant and through his thoughtlessness brought the state to the point of chaos. At this time the rule of the Delhi sultanate reached as far as Bengal and took in a considerable part of the Deccan. Since the defence of the empire required the continued presence of a large army and a ramified central and provincial administrative apparatus, the state treasury was continually short of money. Shah Mohammed introduced additional taxes (*abwab*) which the landowners were required to pay. These *abwab* were so great that the commune members were ruined and had to quit farming and flee to the woods.

As the provinces became depopulated revenue ceased to come to the state. The sultan was forced to issue bronze money which was supposed to have the same exchange rate as silver and gold. This upset the monetary system and further disrupted the economy of the country. Revolts broke out everywhere and the sultan began putting them down brutally until he himself died on the march. His successor, Feroz, was forced to cancel the *abwab* and lower taxes. Irrigation canals were dug all around Delhi. Yet Bengal and Deccan broke away from the sultanate.

Under Feroz Tughlak's successors the empire continued to break down; it was dealt a crushing blow by the forces of Timur, the ruler of Samarkand (1398). In an attempt to intimidate the Indians with his cruelty, Timur slew 100,000 prisoners that he had captured in northern India and built towers with their heads. Having plundered the country's wealth, he retreated taking with him thousands of

prisoners, most of whom were craftsmen. After his invasion famine and disease struck the country.

The Sultanate of Delhi lasted for another hundred and twenty five years under the Sayyid dynasty and the Afghan Lodi dynasty, but its power was already waning. A struggle for power went on all the time between the various palace factions and one after another different groups of feudal lords would gain the upper hand, while the sultans themselves were no more than puppets. Many provinces broke away from the sultanate. About the last representative of the Sayyid dynasty, Shah Alam (1445-1451) a saying arose to the effect that "the power of Shah Alam (literally, 'ruler of the world') stretched from Delhi to Palam" (a suburb of the city where the present Delhi airport stands). The last ruler of the Afghan Lodi dynasty, Shah Ibrahim (1517-1526) tried to behave as though he ruled all the other Indian feudal lords and was not just a member of the Afghan faction, but this only resulted in a mutiny of the Afghan military commanders. The feudal conflicts continued unabated and some of the feudal lords appealed to the ruler of Kabul, Babur, to help rid them of the tyranny of the sultan. Babur had tried himself to seize the rich Indian lands, making several expeditions to that country. In 1526 he defeated Ibrahim in the battle of Panipat and thereby began the Moghul Empire which was to dominate India for the next two hundred years. (The Moghul Empire was thus named because Babur was from Moghulistan, which was then the name for those regions of Central Asia which include Afghanistan.)

The social and economic development of India in the 13th-15th centuries. The Turkic commanders came to India with their own world-view and ideas on the organisation of the state and society, but they could not make radical changes in the methods of farming which had developed in India over the ages. A certain merging of the indigenous and the foreign Muslim forms took place. For instance, the Muslim feudal lords considered the Indian commune a convenient fiscal unit and, while collecting state taxes, did not interfere in the life of the village. But the tax system they introduced was so onerous that the commune landowners gradually turned into taxable peasants. Furthermore, the Delhi sultans took special measures to reduce the social status of the Indians. All Indians

were compelled to a poll-tax (*jiziyah*) which was increased for the higher caste Indians. Under Alaud-din Indian landowners are forbidden by law to carry weapons, dress richly or ride on horseback.

State ownership of the land increased. It was now divided into two categories—*halis* and *ikta*. On *halis* land the taxes were collected by special officials. The land was visually estimated and the headman of the commune was made responsible for the tax payment. Apportionment of the tax according to households was done by the commune. The income from such lands went towards the maintenance of the court and those officials who received their income in kind or in money. At certain periods royal estates were set up in some state lands and slaves were sent to farm them, but the share of such lands was small.

The main part of the state lands was given as service grants, called *ikta*. These were small allotments of land, whose owners were called *iktadars* or *vadjhdars*, and large "feedings", the heads of which were called *mukta*. The *vadjhdars* usually settled in the villages they had been granted, collected taxes either themselves or through their own tax-gatherers and were obliged to provide a soldier from their family for the army. But when Balban tried to take land away from such families in which there were no men capable of bearing arms, such disturbances broke out that he was forced to abandon the idea. In this way the lands belonging to the *iktadars* could in time be classified as private feudal holdings, known as *mulk* or *inam*. The *mukta* had to send a considerable part of the taxes gathered to the state treasury. The state determined their amount and form (i.e. whether in kind or in money). Part of the taxes the *mukta* could spend on maintaining his entourage and his contingents of mercenary soldiers. The holding of the land was conditional, i.e. it was tied to the post held and could not be made hereditary.

There existed, however, one category of private landowners, who could freely alienate their possessions and levy rent without state interference. These landowners were comparatively few in number. In the first place there were the mosques and religious schools (their holdings were called *waqf*), then the guardians of the holy places particularly the sepulchres of the sheikhs, the *ulema* or Muslim theologians, the poets, some of the bureaucratic nobility

and a small group of merchants who had acquired their land (in this case called *mulk*) through purchases. An important source for the formation of private landownership like the *mulk* was the clearing of the jungle and the cultivation of virgin soil, the state, however, tried to impose taxes on the descendants of the *mulk* owners and not everyone of them was able to assert his rights.

Within the sultanate there were also lands belonging to the Indian owners, particularly the *Rajputs*. They had to provide contingents to fight in the army and pay a yearly tribute to the treasury, but their lands could be passed on to their heirs.

Subsequently a cyclic development took place. The *halis* land was sharply reduced and control over the conditional estates gradually weakened. The *ikta* in the 15th century began to approximate to *inam*, that is, private land holdings received through grants. Under the Lodi dynasty the *mukta* also paid nothing to the treasury, although the size of the land tax was in principle determined as before by the state, which always in practice tried to establish that level of tax demands which provided the highest income without bringing the commune landowners to ruin. The Muslim feudal landowners tried to levy "illegal" additional taxes on the villages for their own benefit, and in this way increased tax exploitation. The breakdown of the state system of government and the arbitrary behaviour of the feudal lords resulted in a considerable worsening of the position of the rural population in the early 16th century.

At the same time the Sultanate of Delhi saw the slow but steady development of productive forces. An indication of this is seen in the growth of the population and the ploughing up of the jungle. New settlements sprang up and more careful methods of farming began to be used. The majority of the ploughed land went unwatered and crops depended on the monsoons, but the Delhi government took measures to increase the water supply near the capital by building huge reservoirs at Haus-i-Shamsi and Haus-i-Has together with irrigation canals from the rivers Satlej and Jamuna and watering vast areas of land. Some 50,000 people were engaged in building these projects by way of labour conscription.

The climate in India made two and in the rainy areas three harvests a year possible. Millet, wheat,

barley, 21 different kinds of rice, various kinds of peas, numerous fruits and vegetables, sugar-cane and oil-bearing crops were all grown. The cultivation of Indigo was increased as being the commonest dye for cloth, as was the planting of mulberry trees for silk worms. Craftsmanship developed but remained tied to the different castes. As previously the rural craftsmen made their wares for the commune. The system under which they worked, called *jajmani*, meant that they received a small plot of land or part of the harvest, while their wares were either sold on the spot or in the market. The craftsmen in the countryside often lived together in villages, while in the towns they were to be found in their own quarter. This was particularly true of the weavers, armourers and coppersmiths. There were also a number of builders with numerous skills like stonemasons and bricklayers.

Under the Sultanate of Delhi huge workshops known as *karkhana* made articles for the particular needs of the court. In Ala-ud-din's *karkhana* some 17,000 craftsmen worked (7,000 of whom were builders) at state expense. Under Mohammed Tughlak there were 4,000 weavers alone working in his *karkhana*.

At first the conquest of India by the Central Asiatics led to an increase in the caravan trade between India and the Muslim East with the main Indian import being horses for the army. Coins issued by the Sultanate of Delhi have even been found on the Volga. But the subsequent Mongol invasions and the destruction of a number of towns in Iran and Central Asia resulted in the decline of the Indian caravan trade. This brought greater importance to the Deccan ports which had long conducted seaborne trade and the Sultanate of Delhi's access to them. India exported cotton wares, Bengal silk, weapons, ornaments and utensils out of silver, gold and copper. Slaves were also sold, having been captured in battle in Central Asia and Persia or in the Indian principalities against which "holy war" had been declared. Slaves were mainly used as domestic servants. The seizure of the Deccan was also of great significance for internal trade.

But the numerous taxes and duties that were levied hampered the development of trade and crafts in the Sultanate of Delhi. The urban traders and craftsmen paid *zakat*, or a tax of 2.5 per cent on the value of goods, and *kotwali* or a tax paid to the

headman of the town. There was also *mustaghal*, which was ground rent for dwelling or business premises, as well as numerous road taxes and tolls for entering towns or crossing rivers.

The chronicles mention the building of new towns, but also refer to the expansion, fortification and beautification of old ones, like administrative centres, troops stations and "holy places" which attracted a great number of people. The feudal lords governed the towns. They frequently owned the caravanserais and the craftsmen's shops and they fixed the market duties. A feudal lord could arbitrarily raise taxes or force the merchants to sell goods at a price they named. Only within the castes was there anything like self-government.

Popular discontent expressed itself in the towns in the form of various kinds of "heresy" and in the rural areas in fleeing from the villages. The court chronicles contain a few hazy references to "bandit gangs" and even "bandit tribes" living in the jungle. It is possible that these were fugitive peasants. Only the insurrection of 1419 in the Punjab was described in detail. It was led by Sarenga, who according to the chronicles "stood at the head of the ignorant and benighted people". Only after a long drawn-out struggle was he eventually beaten in battle, captured and put to death.

The Bahmani State. The Deccan Sultanates.

After the Deccan broke away from the Sultanate of Delhi a number of independent Muslim-dominated states made their appearance there also. The first of these was the Bahmani State (1347-1512), which during the period of its greatest might stretched from the Arabian Sea in the west to Orissa in the east. The northern boundary was the river Tapti and the southern, the Krishna and Tungabhadra rivers. To the south lay the Indian state of Vijayanagar with whom the Bahmani fought a war lasting many years for the fertile soil of the Raichur Valley.

The political life of the Bahmani State was determined by this war with Vijayanagar and the internal discords that went on between two Muslim feudal factions, the *Deccani* (who were descendents of the Muslims who had long been living in the Deccan) and the *Afaki* (foreigners who had recently come from Persia and other countries). This enmity was aggravated through religious differences, since the *Afaki* were mainly Shi'ites and Deccani Sunnites. The Bahmani State reached its apogee under

Mahmud Gawan, the court minister (1446-1481). He won a number of important victories, plundered the temple at Kanchi, which was famed for its wealth, and overran Goa. But being an *Afaki* he was the object of constant attack by the *Deccani*. Eventually when an old man he was killed on the orders of the sultan. The Russian merchant from Tver, Afanasy Nikitin, visited the town of Bahmani-Bidar when it was under Mahmud Gawan's control. He wrote of the enormous army of the Bahmanis and of the luxurious wealth of the nobility and the poverty of the people.

But the state was torn apart by feudal strife and internecine conflict and in the early 16th century the Bahmani Empire fell. Of the five principalities that came out of the ruins of the Bahmani State—Bijapur, Golconda, Ahmadnagar, Bidar and Berar—the most powerful was Bijapur. The political history of the Deccan during this period is the history of wars between these principalities and Vijayanagar and among the principalities themselves. Although these wars were nominally fought under the banner of Islam against the Hindus, in fact they were determined by political considerations and not infrequently one or other of these principalities would form an alliance with Vijayanagar against a Muslim rival. In addition, Bijapur fought an unsuccessful struggle against the Portuguese, who in 1510 took from it the Island of Goa. Convinced of the fighting superiority of the Portuguese Bijapur invited them to serve in its army which was then in conflict with Vijayanagar. In 1565 all five Deccan states concluded a treaty against Vijayanagar and in the Battle of Talikota which took place in the same year the Vijayanagar army was defeated. The Indian empire collapsed. But in 1570 300,000 troops from Bijapur and its allies were unable to get back the ports of Goa and Chaul from the Portuguese, who maintained there a garrison of only several thousand men.

Another powerful sultanate in the Deccan was Golconda, which lay along the east coast between the Krishna and Godaveri rivers. Golconda was a rich state with an enormous seaborne trade. Its craftsmen, particularly the weavers and steel smelters, were renowned for their work, and thanks to a wide network of canals the land of the state remained irrigated and fertile. Finally it was in Golconda that the famous diamond mines were situated.

The *Afaki* held the most important posts of state, but the Indians were not persecuted.

In the west of India lay the rich, Muslim-ruled state of Gujarat. Gujarat was one of the most economically developed regions in the country. Sugar-cane and Indigo were grown here and the white and printed cottons and silks of the region were known far beyond the borders of India. But the main source of Gujarat's wealth was its foreign trade, the port of Cambay being the largest on the whole of the west coast. Gujarat had an Arab merchant community and in the 6th century Parsis from Persia settled there bringing their ancient Zoroastrian religion. The Gujarat ports had a large merchant population which included both Hindus and Muslims.

Shah Ahmad I (1411-1442) waged a number of successful campaigns against his neighbours, the *Rajputs*. In his own state he left the *Rajputs* only a quarter of their former estates and for the remaining three-quarters which were now made conditional grants the feudal lords had to pay taxes and do military service. Mahmud Begara (1458-1511) extended the boundaries of his state by subduing several *Rajput* principalities, but after forming an alliance with Egypt their joint fleet was defeated in battle against the Portuguese and he was forced to yield the fortress of Diu which stood at the entrance to the Gulf of Cambay. Eventually seaborne trade from the port of Cambay was severely damaged by Portuguese pirates and this combined with feudal strife within the state weakened Gujarat to such an extent that it fell an easy prey to the Moghuls.

By the 1370s Vijayanagar held all the lands to the south of the River Tungabhadra. Despite the continual warfare first with the Bahmani state, then with the Deccan principalities which lasted almost 200 years, the borders of Vijayanagar were virtually unchanged. The empire reached its zenith during the reign of Krishnadeva Rayi (1509-1529), who formed an alliance with the Portuguese and with their help brought horses for his cavalry across the sea from Persia and Arabia.

In Vijayanagar state lands were also granted conditionally for military service according to a system known as *amaram*. Those who received *amaram* differed from those who received *ikta* in that they themselves fixed the size of their taxes which were not linked to the amount of the revenues they paid to the

state and that they had the right to alienate their land. Theoretically these landowners could not bequeath their land, but in fact the estates remained in the possession of the same clan throughout almost the whole period in which Vijayanagar existed. The commanders of the small military detachments that the *amaram* holders formed also received allotments of land either from the *amaram* holder or the monarch which were always hereditary. The temples also owned large feudal estates. They paid revenues to their lords and had their own vassals who were obliged to defend the temple against bandits or foreign invaders. The temples engaged in trade or usury and had many dependent craftsmen to serve them. These latter were paid either in kind or in land allotments.

The large rural communes broke up. Now, as a rule, they possessed only the lands belonging to one village. The arable lands were divided up, but the uncultivated areas belonged collectively to the village and were not subject to tax. But the overall amount of the taxes increased. In the 14th century all taxes were made monetary and it became more and more difficult for the rural communes to pay them. A number of communes had to sell their village lands and move elsewhere, and some of those who had once been members of the commune became *payakari* (sharecroppers). According to Ferno Nuniz, they had to pay nine-tenths of their crop to the *amaram* holders. The peasants fled from the villages and in many cases revolted.

The towns were run by the feudal governors, who farmed out the port and market taxes to the big landowners and usurers. The ruling feudal lords got rich. Travellers were amazed by the capital of Vijayanagar—its size, its seven huge defence walls, the size of its population, the wealth of its urban markets, its jewellers quarter and its entertainment areas. After defeat in the battle of Balikota Vijayanagar began to decline until it became nothing more than a small principality.

The Portuguese in India. The eastward penetration of the Portuguese played a major role in the history of India. The Island of Goa became the central Portuguese base in a line stretching from the Persian Gulf to China. The monopoly of seaborne trade which they maintained for themselves in this region undermined India's trade with other oriental countries, cut off the interior parts of the country

and held up their development. The Portuguese destruction of the parts of Malabar and the annihilation of their populations led to that rich coastline becoming one of the most backward parts of India. Gujarat was also weakened. So long as the Portuguese fought only with local armies their advantage in weaponry enabled them not only to defend but to extend their possessions. But their domination at sea was undermined by the arrival of the Dutch and the English to the extent that they could no longer oppose the armies of the local rulers which took back one stronghold after another.

Islam and the local religions. In the Indian states that had Muslim rulers the Islamic religion was forcibly introduced. Furthermore, the Indians took the Islamic faith for the privileges it conferred, to get rid of the *jizyah* tax and in the hope of being freed from caste membership. Together with the Muslim conquerors came their kinsmen and fellow-tribesmen and the courts of the Indian sultans attracted many Islamic scholars and poets from other countries. A Muslim population grew up in India and in some places like Bengal most of the inhabitants were Muslim. But unlike in other Islamic countries the Islamic faith in India was never the only religion—it remained one of the two. Throughout most of the country the Muslims were the ruling class. They commanded the armies and headed the state administration, but tax farming remained in the hands of the Indians, since it was they who formed the majority of the merchants and usurers. The peasants as a rule were Hindus.

Despite the bitter conflicts between the Hindus and the Muslims, the long period in which they lived together in the same country resulted in a mutual interpenetration of ideas and customs. The Indian Muslims adopted the caste system and the worship of local gods, which gradually turned into Muslim saints, while at the same time adopting the practice of yoga and the Indian festivals. Indian Islam assumed a pantheistic colouring. On the other hand, the Hindus were influenced by the Muslim ideas of brotherhood as well as the practice of Sufism with its teaching of the various paths to union with God. Among the Sufiists there were orders whose ideas were close to Hinduism (like the Chishtie and the Firdousi) and others which fiercely objected to such “innovations” (the Shattarie and the Suhrawardie).

The amalgam of Hindu and Islamic ideas was most clearly evident in the later *Bhakti* as it was called, a movement which appealed to Hindus and Muslims alike. Composed of the oppressed classes in feudal society (particularly the urban tradesmen and craftsmen) it reflected in mystic-religious form oppositional, antifeudal aspirations. In the principle of equality before God that *Bhakti* proclaimed we can discern the ideal of social equality and protest against the lords, against the higher clergy of both religions and against the privileged position of the Muslims and the caste inequality of the Hindus. *Bhakti* teaching was expounded through the media of hymns sung in the local languages, which contained parables from nature and everyday life and which described the desire for closeness to God in terms of human love. The popular melodies in which these hymns were sung eventually resulted in their becoming folk songs.

The best known teachers of *Bhakti* were Kabir (1380-1414), a Muslim weaver, who lived in Allahabad and composed his songs in one of the colloquial dialects of Hindi; Nandev, a Hindu and the son of a tailor from Maharashtra; Nanak (1469-1538), a Hindu grain trader from Lahore, who founded the sects of Sikhs (pupils); and Chaitanya in Bengal who combined the teaching of *Bhakti* with the Vishnu cult of the shepherd Krishna. All these different sects of *Bhakti*, which began by opposing the caste system, in time became closed castes themselves, and some of their leaders who received regular contributions from their followers became to all intents and purposes petty feudal lords themselves.

The culture of free India. The official language of the Sultanate of Delhi was a mixture of Tajik and Persian and it had enormous influence on the formation in northern India of a new language which had Indian grammar but a predominantly Persian and Arabic vocabulary. This language was Urdu. The greatest poet of the period, Amir Khusrau (1253-1325) wrote not only in Persian, but also in Urdu, which he called Hindavi.

With the exception of the *Rajatarangini* (“River of the Raj”) which were in effect the chronicles of the Kashmir rulers written in verse in Sanskrit around the middle of the 12th century by the poet Kalhana, no chronicles were written in India before the Muslim invasion. The Khorezmian scholar, Al-Biruni (973-1048), who was taken prisoner by Mohammed

of Ghazni and brought by him to India, made a detailed collection of all information available on India at the time and wrote an encyclopaedic work entitled *History of India* which became a valuable historical source. The Iranian scholar, Minhaj-Siraj Juzjani (born 1193), who fled to India from the Mongolian invasion, wrote chronicles entitled *Ta-bagat-i-Nasiri* in honour of his patron, Nasir the sultan of Delhi. In the 14th century there were a number of valuable chronicles written in Persian which served as models of prose in that language. These were composed by Barani and Afifi, who both entitled their works *Tarikh-i-Firuz-shahi* in honour of Sultan Firuz Tughlak.

Muslim rule in India brought with it Islamic religious architecture which was of a kind previously unknown in the country. The proportionality and beauty of its lines, bereft as they are of all sculptural ornamentation, produces a powerful impression on the beholder. The Kutb Minar minaret in Delhi, for example,—a high ribbed tower faced with red sandstone and covered with carved geometrical ornament and arabesques—produces an effect which is both elegant and powerfully impressive. The Mausoleum of Illtutmish, which stands close by—a square structure with an arched entrance on all four sides—served as a model for subsequent mausoleums. The buildings erected under the Tughlaks were simple, but powerful and impressive, while those of the Lodis were small, but elegant. Islamic architecture also developed under the Muslim rulers in the Deccan. But at the same time the Muslim religion with its strictures on the portrayal of living beings dealt a serious blow to the development of Indian architecture, sculpture and painting.

The formation and development of the Moghul Empire. Babur, conqueror of India, reigned there for five years. On his death he divided his possessions among his sons, leaving the main part of the country to Humayun, his eldest son. But Humayun could not maintain his power in the struggle with Sher-khan Sur, leader of the Afghans in Bihar and Bengali and was forced to flee to Persia. Sher-khan then took the title of Shah Sher and ruled Delhi from 1540 to 1545. He undertook numerous reforms, which were subsequently furthered by his son, Humayun Akbar. He introduced the branding of the horses of warriors so as to check how

many horsemen the military commanders actually maintained with the grants they were given for the purpose. He tried in the interests of the state treasury to limit the arbitrariness of the tax farmers in determining the size of peasant holdings and the amount of their harvest. He tried wherever possible to get taxes in kind replaced by taxes in money and was merciless in his treatment of peasant resistance. After Shah Sher's death as the result of an accident a struggle broke out between the various claimants to the throne. Humayun, returning from Iran with an army composed of various nations—Turks, Persians, Afghans, Turkmens and Uzbeks, took advantage of this situation. He defeated the forces of the claimants and took Delhi in 1555, but died a few months later. He was succeeded by his young son, Akbar, who ruled India for almost half a century (1556-1605) and who firmly established the power of the Moghuls. Akbar made Agra the capital of the state.

Under Akbar the Moghul Empire did not reach beyond the two rivers, Ganges and Jamuna. But to strengthen the state it was vital to extend its territory. During the period in which Akbar was still a minor, Ajmer and the fortress of Gwalior were taken from the *Rajputs* and later Malwa was annexed. At the age of 18 Akbar began to rule on his own. A clever, strong and bold youth, and possessed of a phenomenal memory, Akbar nevertheless despite all the efforts of his teachers had no desire to read or write. He understood that India could only be ruled with the support of both Hindus and Muslims. He formed alliances with the bellicose *Rajputs* and endorsed them by his marriage to a number of *Rajput* princesses. The Moghul army was reinforced by the cavalry of the *Rajput* leader, Amber. Willingness to serve the Muslim ruler gave rise to protests among orthodox *Rajput* circles who believed that their troops would defile themselves by staying at the Muslim court. With the help of his *Rajput* allies Akbar subdued the *Rajput* principalities that continued to offer resistance. He annexed Chittoor (1568), Rantamhore (1569) and the larger part of Rajputana. Only Rajah Mevara refused to submit by fleeing to the mountains with a handful of followers and continuing resistance for a quarter of a century.

In 1563 orthodox Muslims broke out in revolt in the Punjab, proclaiming Humayun's youngest son

by his second wife who lived in Kabul as their ruler. The revolt was joined by the *mirzas*, Uzbek military commanders from Sambhal who were discontented by the advancement of the *Rajputs* at court, and lasted until 1567 when it was put down. In pursuit of the fugitive *mirzas* Akbar invaded Gujarat and took over this rich land together with the trading port of Surat, the largest in India. The next two years were spent on the conquest of Bengal. In 1589 Akbar annexed Kashmir and in 1590 conquered Tatha (Sind). In 1592 he took Orissa and in 1595 conquered Baluchistan and took Kandagar from Persia. At the same time the Moghul armies began to invade the Deccan, but there the desire for military glory waned. The Moghul commanders got used to luxurious living and took away vast caravan-loads of personal belongings which hampered the army's manoeuvrability. Their thoughts were more on feasts than on feats of martial glory. At that time there were three large states in the Deccan—Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golconda. From 1583 to 1599 the Moghuls besieged Ahmadnagar, capital of the principality of the same name and the weakest of the Deccan sultanates, until the ruler agreed to accept that he was a vassal of Akbar. Another two years were spent on besieging the fortress of Handesh Asirgarkh which fell within a few months.

Akbar strengthened his empire with a number of reforms. In the outlying districts and provinces both civilian and military authorities were set up to control each other. The state's share of the harvest was set at one-third, an amount that was believed to be feasible for the peasants to pay. But the change from tax in kind to tax in money which was in force in the central provinces made the peasants' position worse. Therefore, in years of good harvest the state reduced taxes in some provinces, since the peasants took little money for their crops. Akbar also made extensive use of *corvée* in the building of fortresses. To regulate tax gathering he decreed the measuring of all arable land in the centre of the state and insisted that this measuring was not carried out with a rope which could be shortened or stretched at will, but with a bamboo stick. To improve trade internal tolls at town gates and river crossings were lowered to 1.5 per cent and standard measures and monetary units were introduced throughout the whole Moghul Empire.

Two measures were given the greatest importance.

The first was the introduction of a hierarchy of offices (*mansabs*) and ranks (*zat*) and the fixing of the number of cavalymen (*sawar*), which the military commander was obliged to maintain. The size of the *jagir*, or estate given in return for service, depended on the *zat* and the *sawar*. An attempt to do away with the *jagir* and pay military commanders in money fell through as a result of opposition from the *jagir* owners.

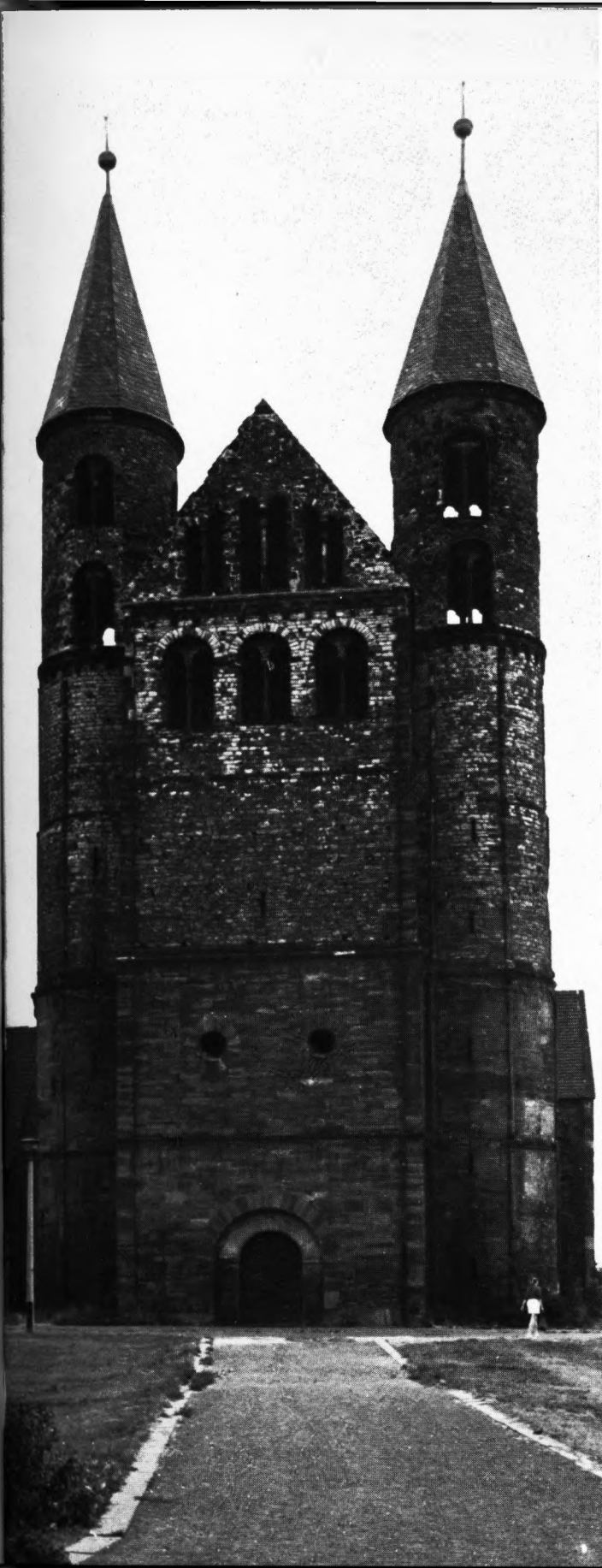
The second measure of great importance was the introduction of a policy of religious tolerance. Akbar allowed his Indian wives to practise Hindu rites in the harem and brought a number of *Rajput* military commanders closer to him. In 1563 he repealed the tax on Indian pilgrims and a year later did away with the *jizyah*. In the small town of Sikri near Agra, which he had rebuilt and renamed (it was now known as Fatehpur Sikri—"the town of victory") and to which he had moved his court, Akbar built a Prayer House where he arranged for disputes to be held in his presence between priests of the various religions and from different castes. The fierce debates that took place here resulted in Akbar moving further and further away from Muslim orthodoxy. In this he was supported by his principal minister, Abul Fazl, who in his youth had joined the heretic *mahdizm* movement, a religious grouping which at the time had been the banner of the antifeudal opposition. Akbar became acquainted with the teachings of the Hindus, the Jaini, the Parsi and the Christians and introduced certain Hindu and Parsi rites into the court.

This gave rise in 1580 to a major rebellion that was headed by the sheikhs. Having put down the rebellion and returned to Agra (Fatehpur Sikri turned out not to have enough water), Akbar began to introduce to the court a new religion of his own devising. He called it *Din-I-Ilahi* ("divine faith") and it represented an amalgam of what he considered the most reasonable elements of the basic religions of India. This religion found almost no adherents among the court, but the policy of religious tolerance won over the Indians and expanded the social base of his power.

Akbar was favourable in his attitude to the Punjab sect of the Sikhs, who had established themselves during his reign in Amritsar where they built a tem-







1. Stained Glass Window—the Guild Minor. Riga

2. Monastery church of St Kyriakos. Gerirote. 10th-12th centuries

3. The Church of the Virgin. Western façade. 12th century. Magdeburg

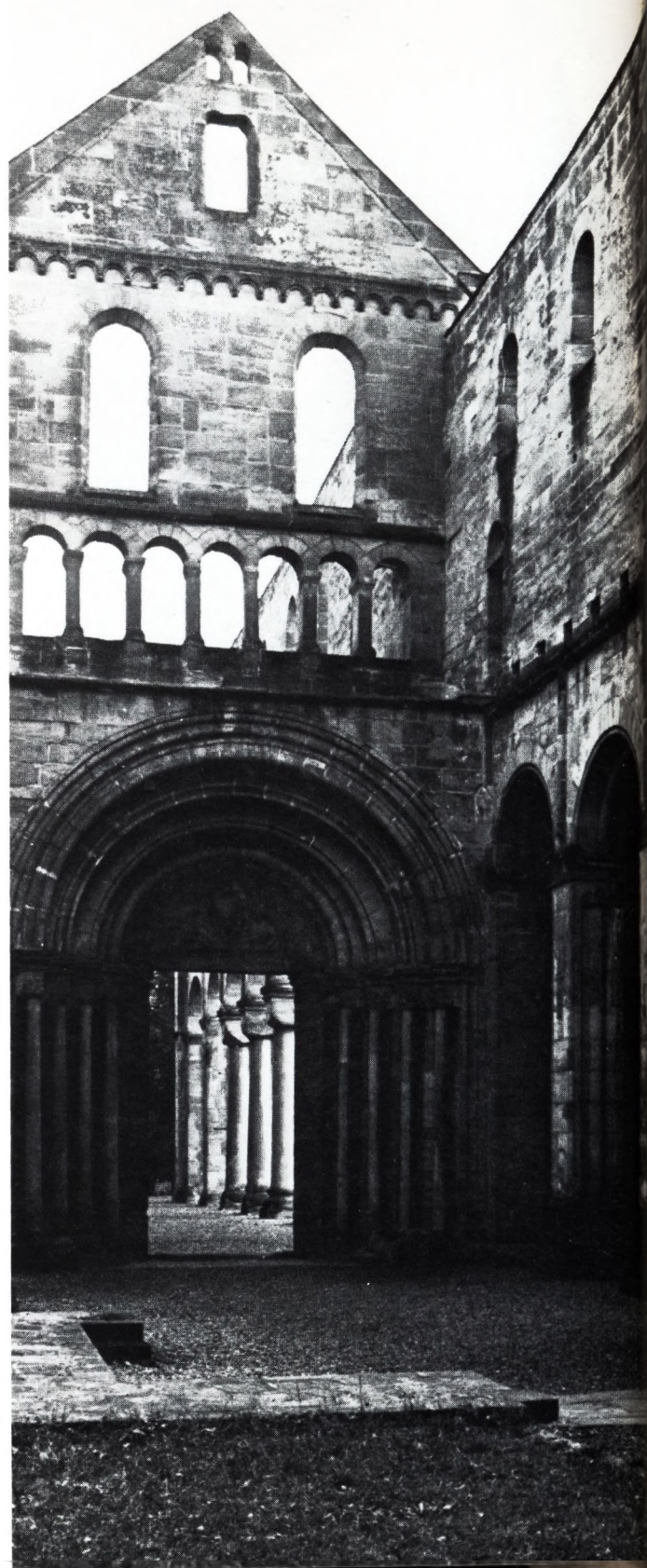
4. Cathedral. Gravestone of Archbishop Friedrich von Wettin. Magdeburg. 1152



5



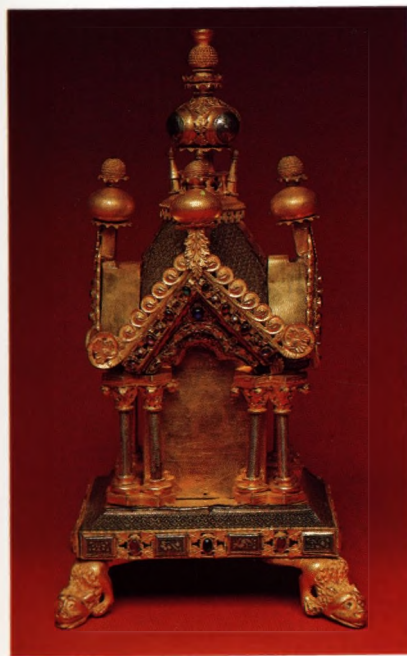
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5. Casket-reliquary decorated with images of saints. Gilded brass. Late 12th century. France

6. The Premonstratensian Church in Jerichow. Begun c. 1207

7. Benedictine Monastery Church. Paulinzella. Middle of the 12th century

8. Marienkirche. Detail of the portal. Freiburg. 1230s

9. Reliquary in the form of a square building. Lower Rhine. Second half of the 12th century

9





11



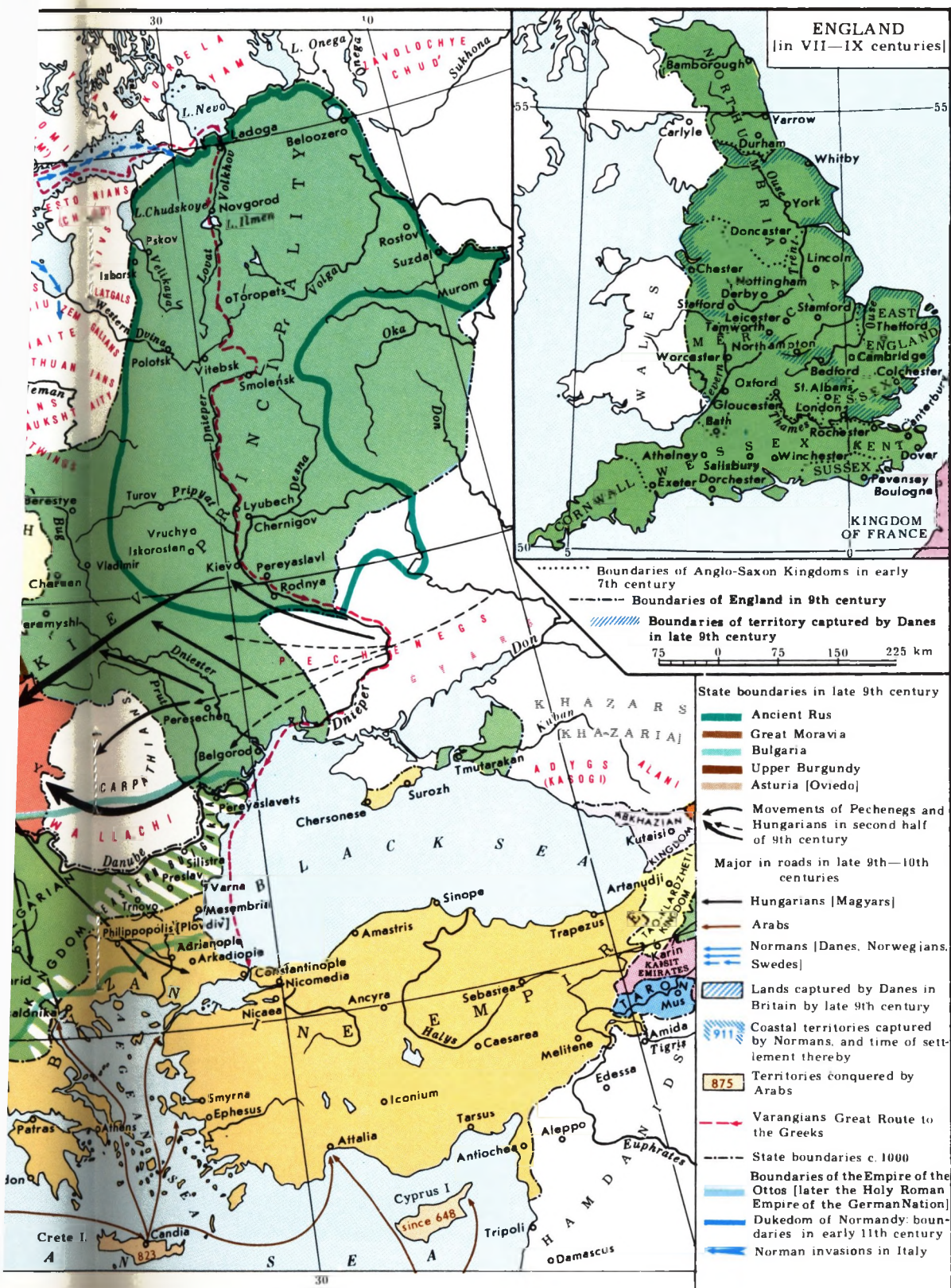
12

10. Gothic Romanesque cathedral.
Limburg on the Lahn. 1235

11. Monastery church of St Kyriakos.
Gerolde, 10th-12th centuries

12. Church of the Blessed Virgin. Relief
of the apostle Andrew on the altar
screen. Halberstadt. C. 1200





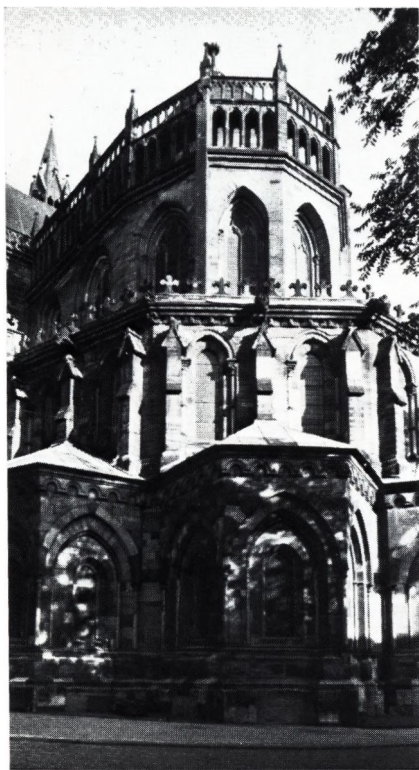


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13. Flabellum (church fan). Germany. C. 1180

14. Cathedral. View from the east. First half of the 13th century. Magdeburg

15. Worms. The Late Romanesque cathedral. 1240



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16. Monastery church. Western façade. Chorin. 1234-1334

17. Cathedral. Northern portal of the transept. First half of the 13th century. The Foolish Virgins. Sculpture. Magdeburg. 1240-1250.

18. Cathedral. Northern portal of the transept. First half of the 13th century. The Wise Virgins. Sculpture. Magdeburg. 1240-1250

19. Chalice depicting the twelve apostles. Silver-gilt. First half of the 13th century



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20. Tabernacle decorated with angels. Gilded brass. First half of the 14th century. Limoges, France

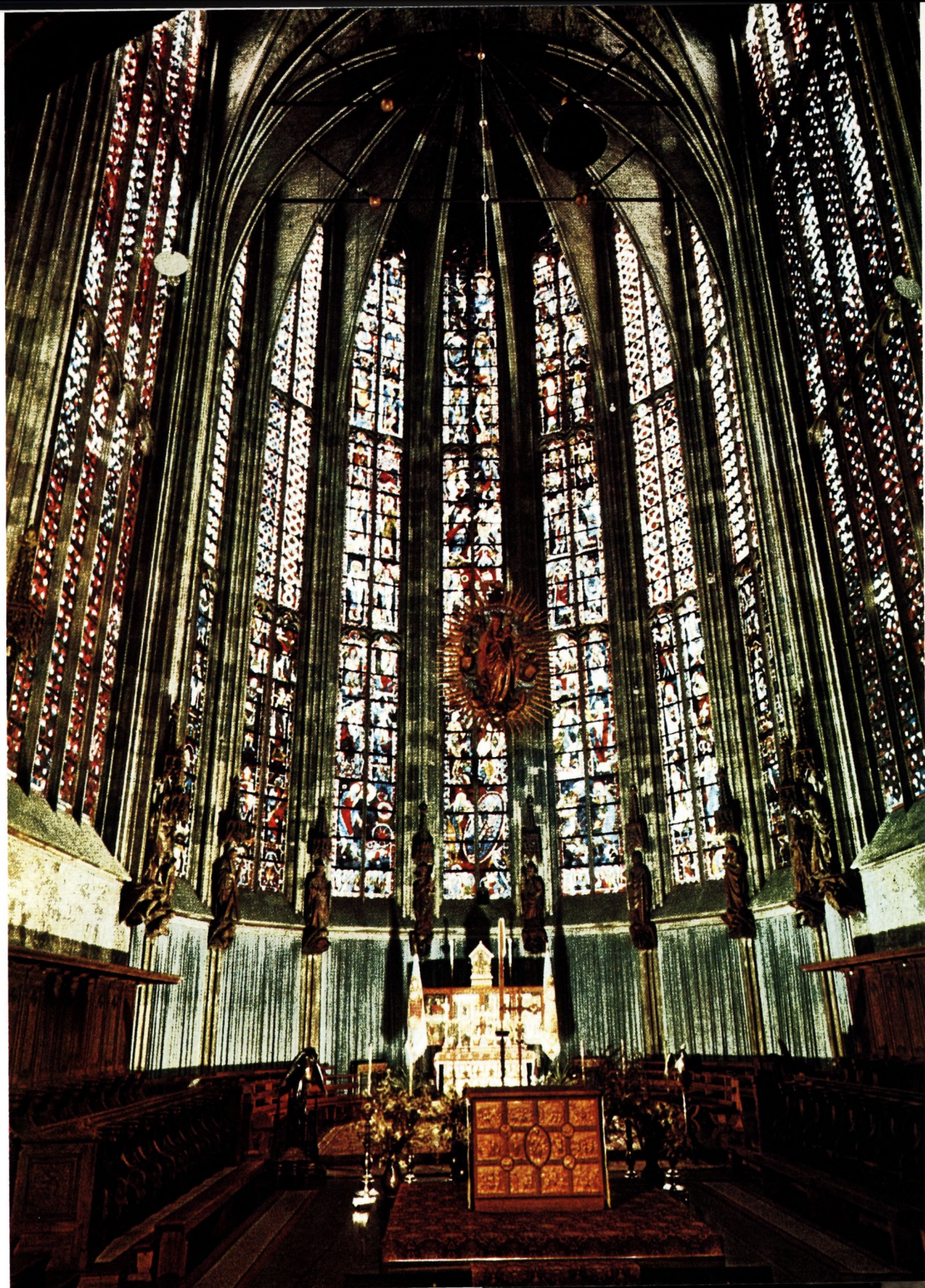
21. Statue of the sleeping Madonna and Child. Gilded ivory. First half of the 14th century

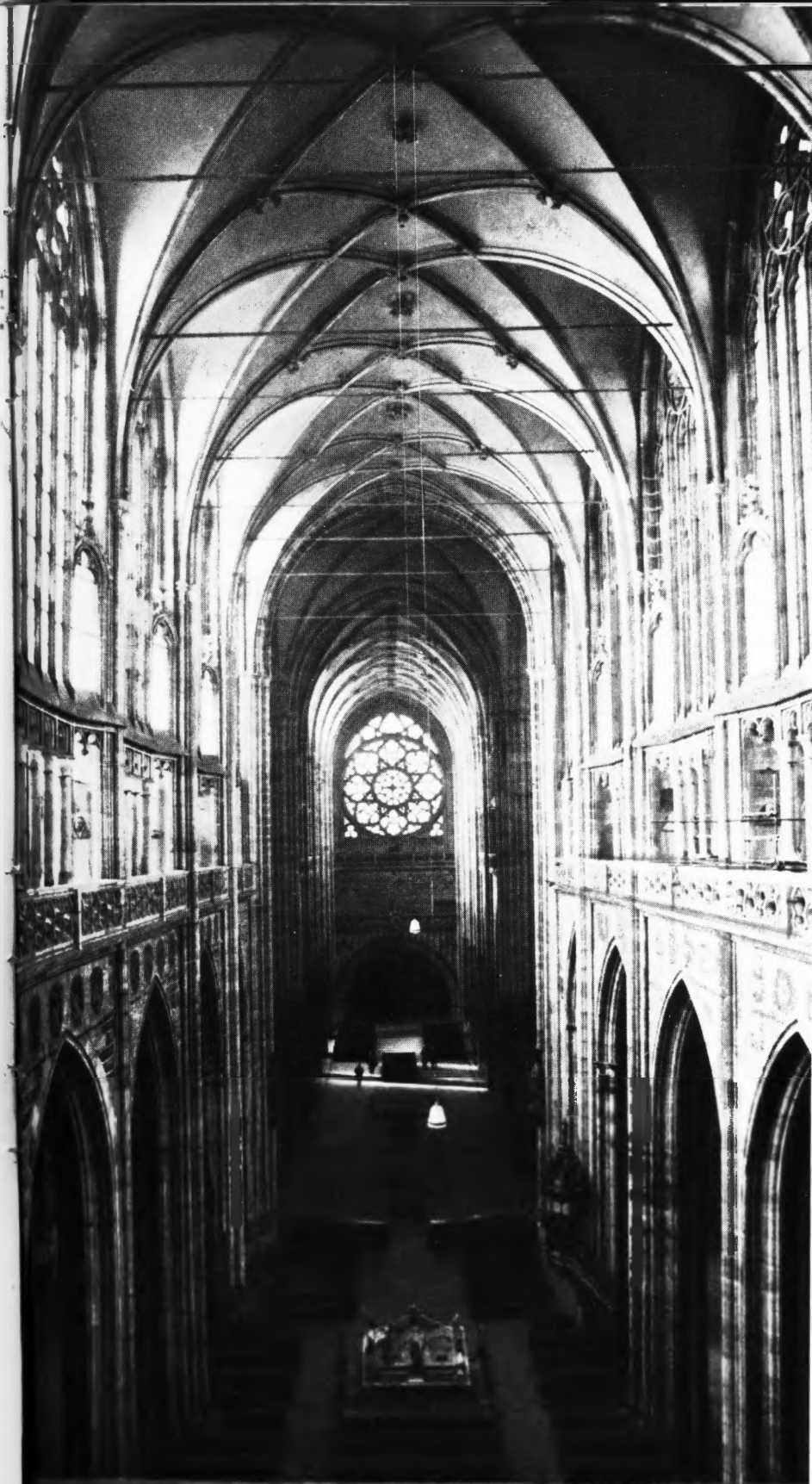
22. Eltz Castle near Moselkern. 1150

23. Plate depicting a hare. Silver-gilt and enamel. First half of the 14th century

24. Uta. Stone. Naumburg, Cathedral. Germany. 13th century

25. Woven curtain with birds and rosebuds. Silk, linen and gold thread. Italy, 14th century





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26. Aachen cathedral. 9th century

27. Cathedral of St. Vitus in Prague. Interior. View from east to west

28. Cathedral of St. Vitus in Prague. The Gallery. Bust

29. Cathedral of St. Vitus in Prague. The Gallery. Bust





31

30. Church of St. Barbara. Interior. General view. Kutna Hora

31. Filippo Lippi. "The Vision of Blessed Augustine"

32. Carpet. 16th century. The Netherlands. State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts. Moscow



32



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33. Aspersorium decorated with images of saints. France. 15th century

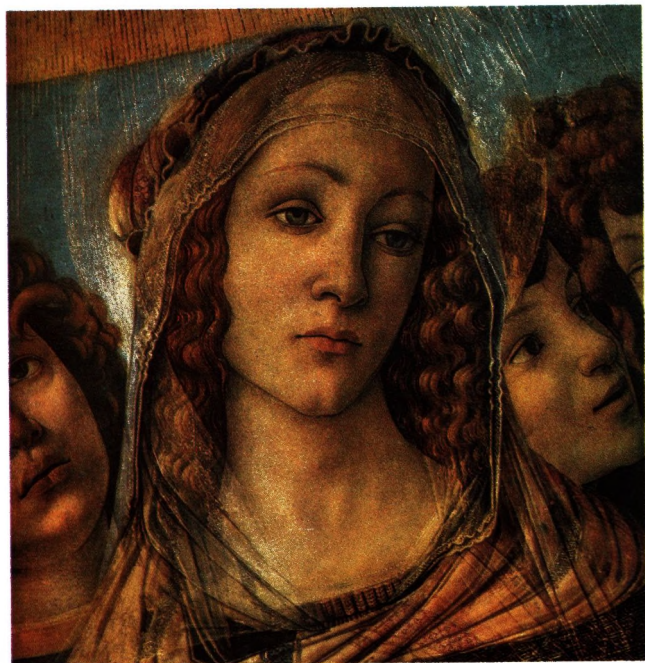
34. Carpet. 16th century. The Netherlands. State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts. Moscow

35. Jean Bellegambe. *The Annunciation*. 14th century

36. Michelangelo. *Virgin and Child in the Medici Chapel*

37. Michelangelo. *Pieta*. Florence

38. Filippo Lippi. *Adoration of the Magi*. 1480





39. Raphael. *Madonna with the Beardless St. Joseph*

40. Sandro Boticelli. *Madonna of the Pomegranate*. Detail. 1487

41. Cathedral. Interior. General view. Freiburg. 1484-1510

42. Raphael. *The Conestabile Madonna*. 1500

43. Jan van Eyck. *The Ghent Altarpiece*. The Hermitage. Leningrad

44. Jan van Eyck. *Head of Maria*. Detail of the Ghent altar. The Hermitage. Leningrad





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45. Goblet depicting the sacrifice of Abel. Italy. 1525

46. Goblet. Italy. 1525

47. Giorgione. *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*. 16th century

48. Leonardo da Vinci. *Madonna Litta*

49. Goblet decorated with a scene depicting numerous figures. Italy. 1541

50. A table cabinet decorated with figures of the classical gods. 16th century. Milan. Italy





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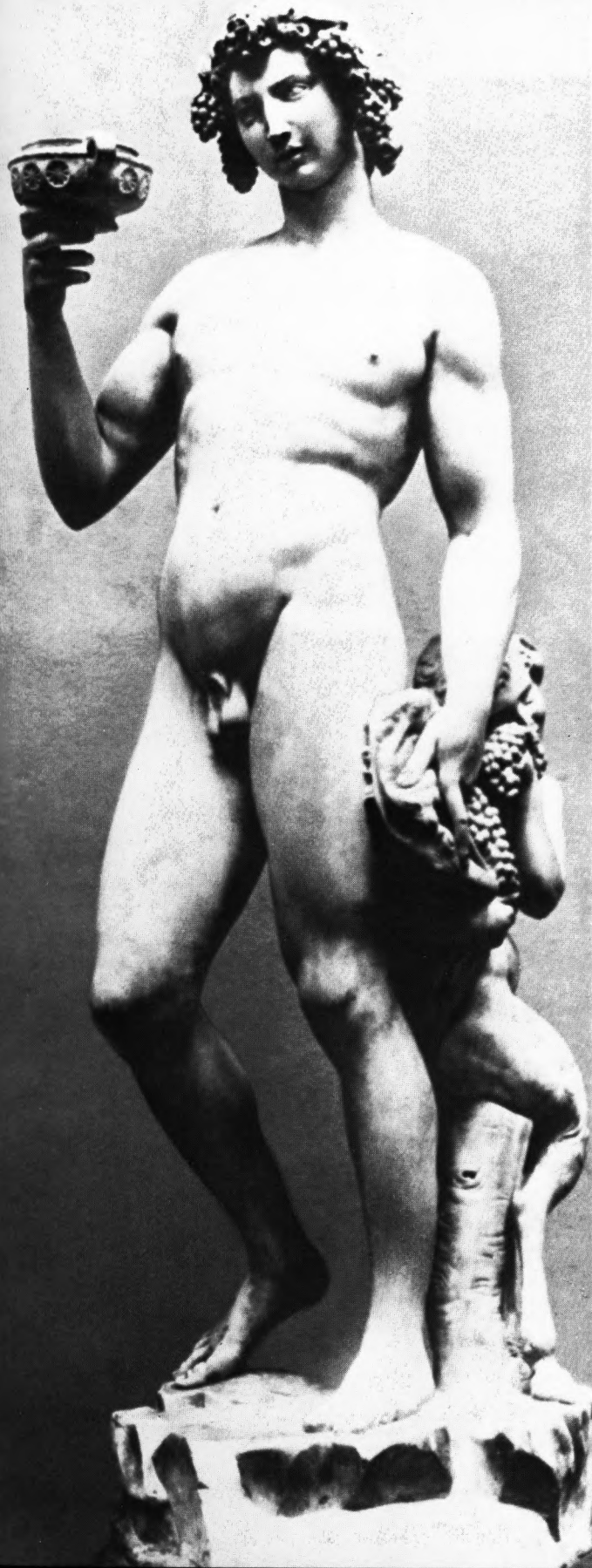
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51. Giovanni Bellini. *Virgin and Child*.
15th century

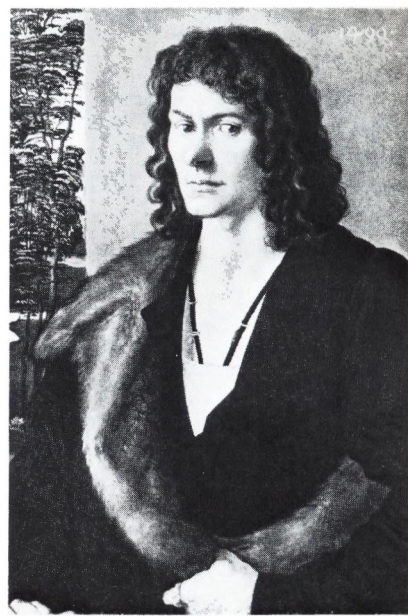
52. Plate depicting the myth of Psyche.
Brass and enamel. Mid-16th century

53. Casket decorated with scenes from
the life of St Margaret. France. 1535

54. Jan Provost. *Deipara Virgo*. 1524

55. Michelangelo. *Bacchus*

56. Holbein the Younger. *Sieur de
Morette*. Dresden Art Gallery





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57. Lucas Cranach the Elder. *Portrait of a Woman*. 1526

58. Paolo Veronese. *Pieta*. 16th century

59. Albrecht Dürer. *Portrait of Oswald Kroll*. Leningrad.

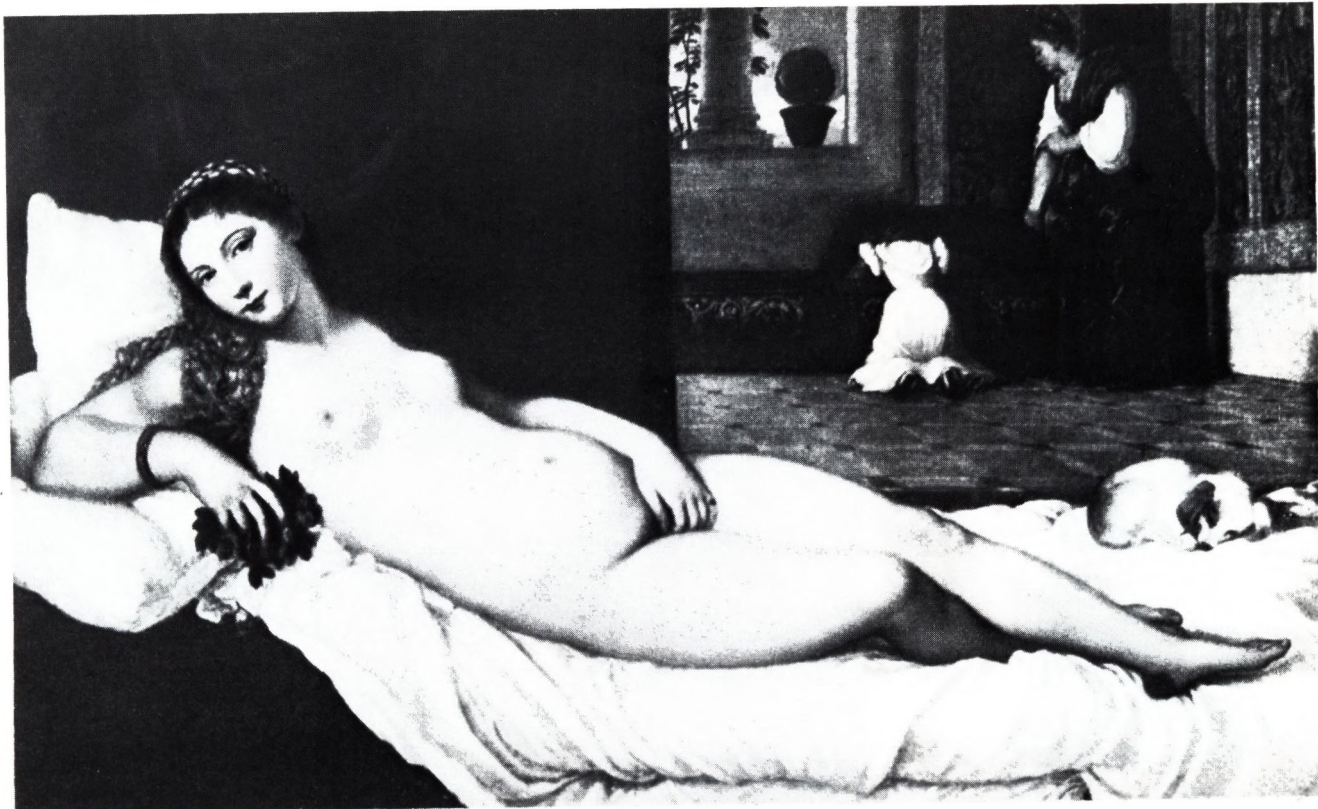
60. Tintoretto. *The Birth of John the Baptist*. 1550

61. Lucas Cranach the Elder. *Virgin and Child under an Apple-tree*. The Hermitage, Leningrad

62. Lucas Cranach the Elder. *Venus and Cupid*. 1509

63. Albrecht Dürer. *Knight, Death and the Devil*. Moscow





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64. Embroidery. Linen, satin and velvet with silk and gold thread. Late 16th century. France

65. Rogier van der Weyden. Detail of the St. Columbus altar. The Hermitage. Leningrad

66. Titian. *St. Sebastian*. 1560-1570

67. Titian. *The Venus in Urbino*

68. Holbein. *Portrait of a Young Man*. 16th century.



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69. Chased silver-gilt double cup.
16th century

70. Chased silver-gilt double cup.
Late 16th century

71. Rogier van der Weyden.
The Descent from the Cross

72. Del Sarto. *Madonna with
Child and Saints*. 16th century

73. Surbaran. *St. Lawrence*. 1636

74. Dish with coat-of-arms. 16th
century. Italy





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75. Terborch. *A Glass of Lemonade*. 1655-1660

76. Jordaens. *The Bean King*. 1638

77. Velazquez. *The Breakfast*. 1617

78. Coconut shell cup with silver-gilt mount. Early 17th century. Germany



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80



81



79. Silver-gilt beaker decorated with filigree and enamelled medallions. 1694

80. Nautilus cup with silver-gilt mount and putto figure. Early 17th century

81. Sneyders. *The Fruit Stall*. 1620

82. Pieter de Hooch. *Mistress with Servant*. 1660

83. Helmet. Italy. 16th century. The Armoury. Moscow.



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84. Basilica of St. Joan in Ephesus. Arcade of the central nave. Mid-6th century

85. The Church of St. Sergius and Vaachus. Interior. Capitals of columns and cornice of the lower tier. Constantinople. 527-536

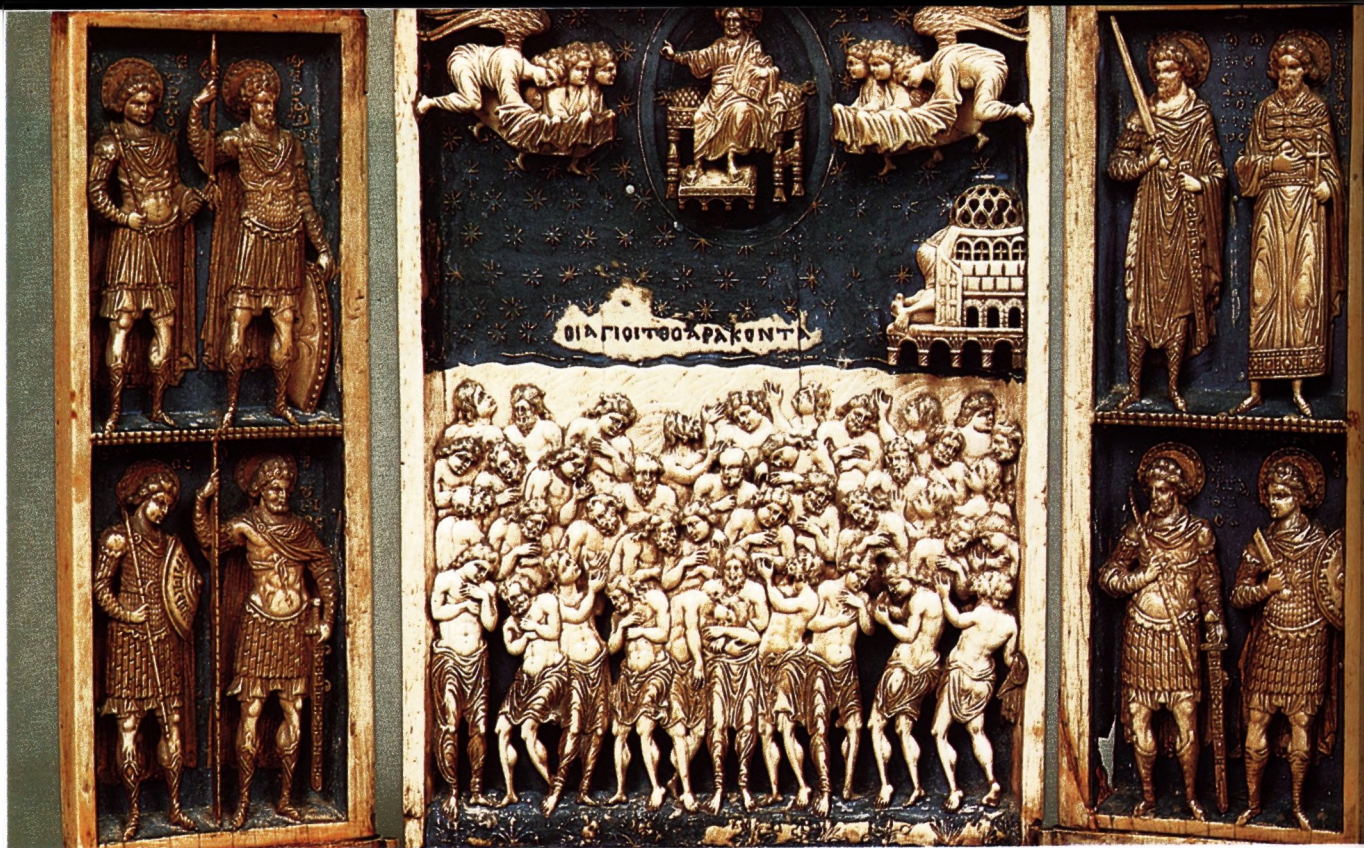
86. Dish. Byzantium. 613-629

87. St. Sophia. Interior. General view. Constantinople. 532-537

88. St. Sophia. *Constantine IX Monomach, Christ Pantocrator, Empress Zoya*. Mosaic. Constantinople. 1028-1042

89. St. Sophia. *St. John Chrysostom*. Mosaic. Constantinople. 10th century

90. St. Sophia. *Emperor John II Komnin, Madonna and Child, Empress Irina*. Mosaic. Constantinople. 1118-1122



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91. Triptych, 10th-11th centuries.
Byzantium

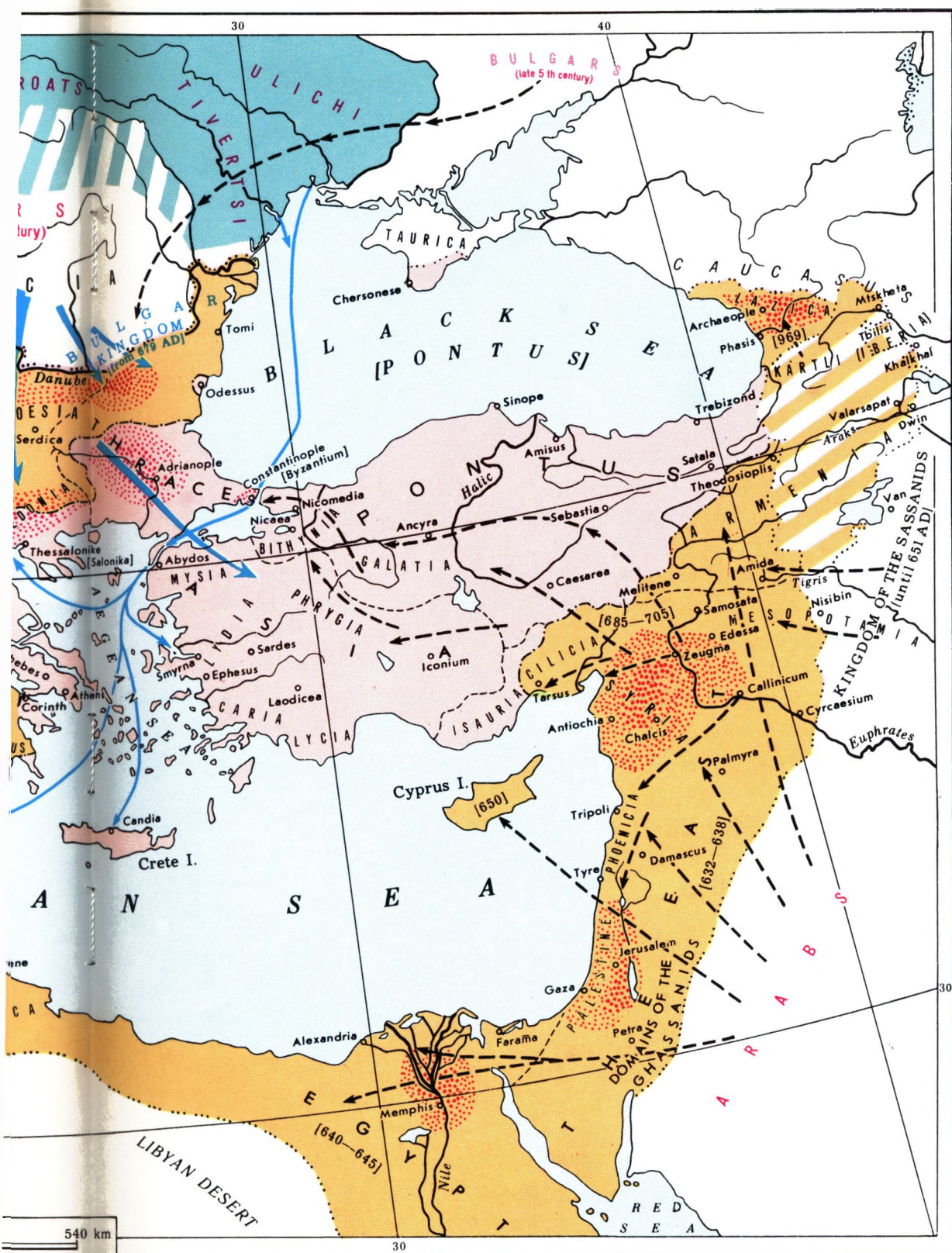
92. Constantinople. Mirellion. General
view from the south-west

93. Triptych, 10th-11th centuries.
Byzantium. Detail

94. St. Sophia. View from the
east. Constantinople, 532-537

95. Plaque, 12th century. South Italy

96. St. Sophia. *Archangel Gabriel*.
Mosaic. Constantinople. 9th century







101

97. *St. Demetrius of Thessalonica*. 12th century. Moscow

98. *Fetiye Cami*. Istanbul. C. 1300

99. *St. Mark the Evangelist*. Gospel Book. 9th century. Leningrad

100. *St. Sophia*. *St. John the Baptist*. Detail. Mosaic. *Deesis*. Constantinople. 13th century

101. *The Architect*. Sculpture in stone. 12th century. Ryazan



ὁ ἱερεὺς ἐποίησεν
ἀνεκέρτομεν
τὴν ἀδελφὴν
καὶ ἡ ἀδελφὴ τῆς
καὶ ἀδελφῆς

οὐκ ἐποίησεν
προστονόν
τῆς ἀδελφῆς
ἐκ τοῦ δονῆ
καὶ τὸν ὄντι

Εὐκαίχαρσιν
ἐλπίσιν ἀρμονίᾳ
ἀναγγελλοῖς
καὶ τῆς αὐτῆς
ὁ δὲ ἐπορεύθη
ταῖς ἀρεταῖς
ἐν τῷ ἀδελφῷ
ἐλθόντων ἐκ
τῆς αὐτῆς
τοῦ πολεμίου





102. St. Mark the Evangelist. Gospel Book. 9th century. Leningrad

103. *The Incredulity of St Thomas*. 9th century

104. *The Last Supper*. Byzantine miniature. Gospel Book. 9th century. Leningrad

105. *Christ with Martha and Mary*. 9th century. Leningrad

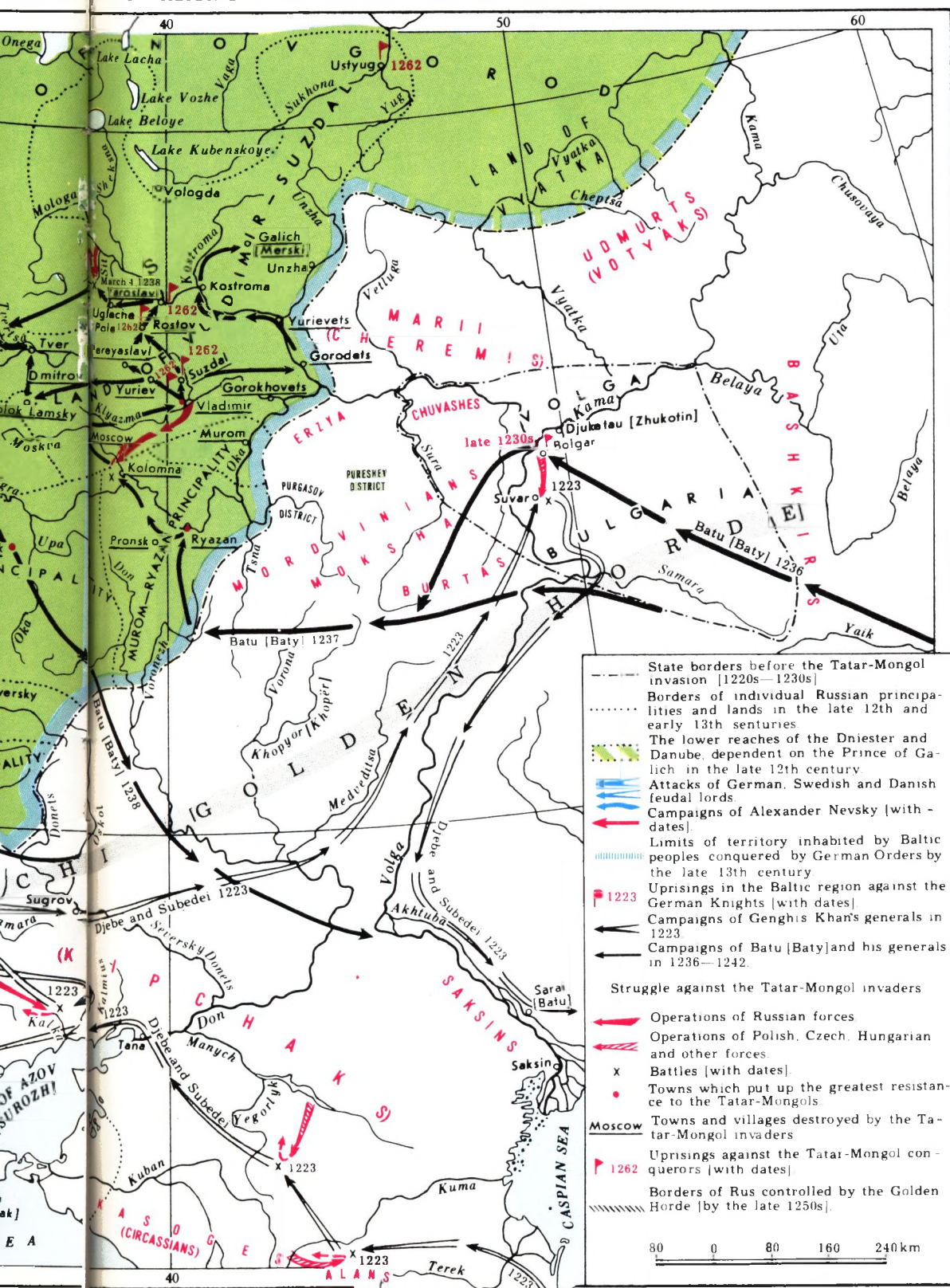
106. *St. George*. Church of the Dormition in the Moscow Kremlin. 11th-early 12th centuries

107. *The Vernicle*. Icon. Late 12th century. Moscow

108. Perfume container (kolt) decorating a woman's headdress. 12th-13th centuries. Kiev











109. *St. Demeterius of Thessalonica and an Unknown Warrior*. Bas-relief from the Mikhailovsky Monastery of the Golden Gates. 11th century. Moscow

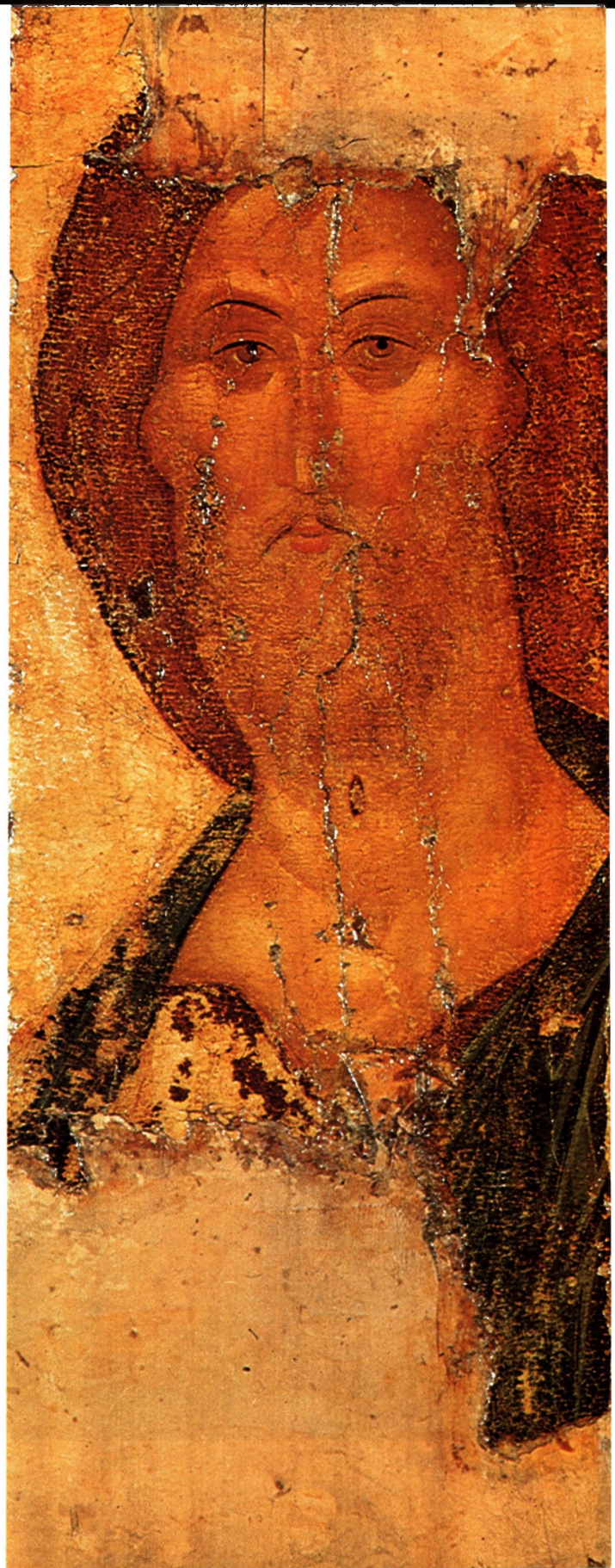
110. *St. Thomas the Apostle*. 1360s

111. Crucifix containing relics of St Sergius of Radonezh. 14th century

112. Byzantine cameo of St. Ipatii. 14th century. Zagorsk

114. *The Saviour*. 14th century

113. Gold ornamentation to adorn the icon of Our Lady of Vladimir. 14th century







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115. Andrei Rublyov. *The Old Testament Trinity*. Early 15th century

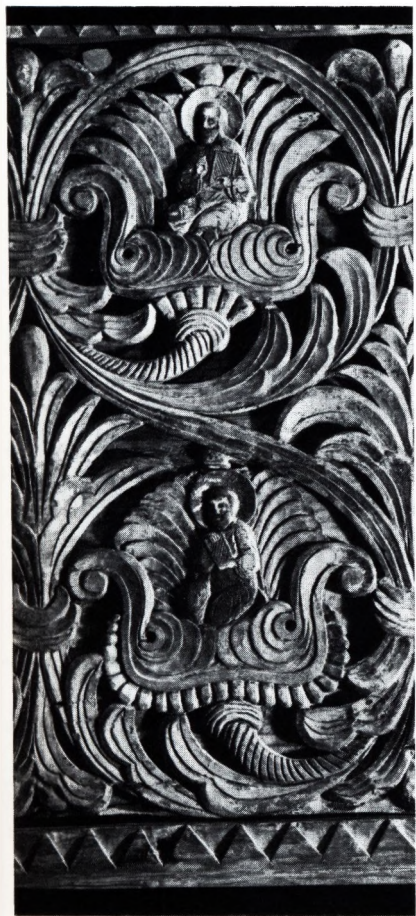
116. Andrei Rublyov and assistants. *St. Peter the Apostle*. 1408

117. *Three Prophets*. 15th century. Moscow

118. The Fyodor Koshka New Testament. 1389. Moscow

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119. The shroud of St. Anne. Entombment. 15th century

120. *The Nativity*. Early 15th century. Moscow

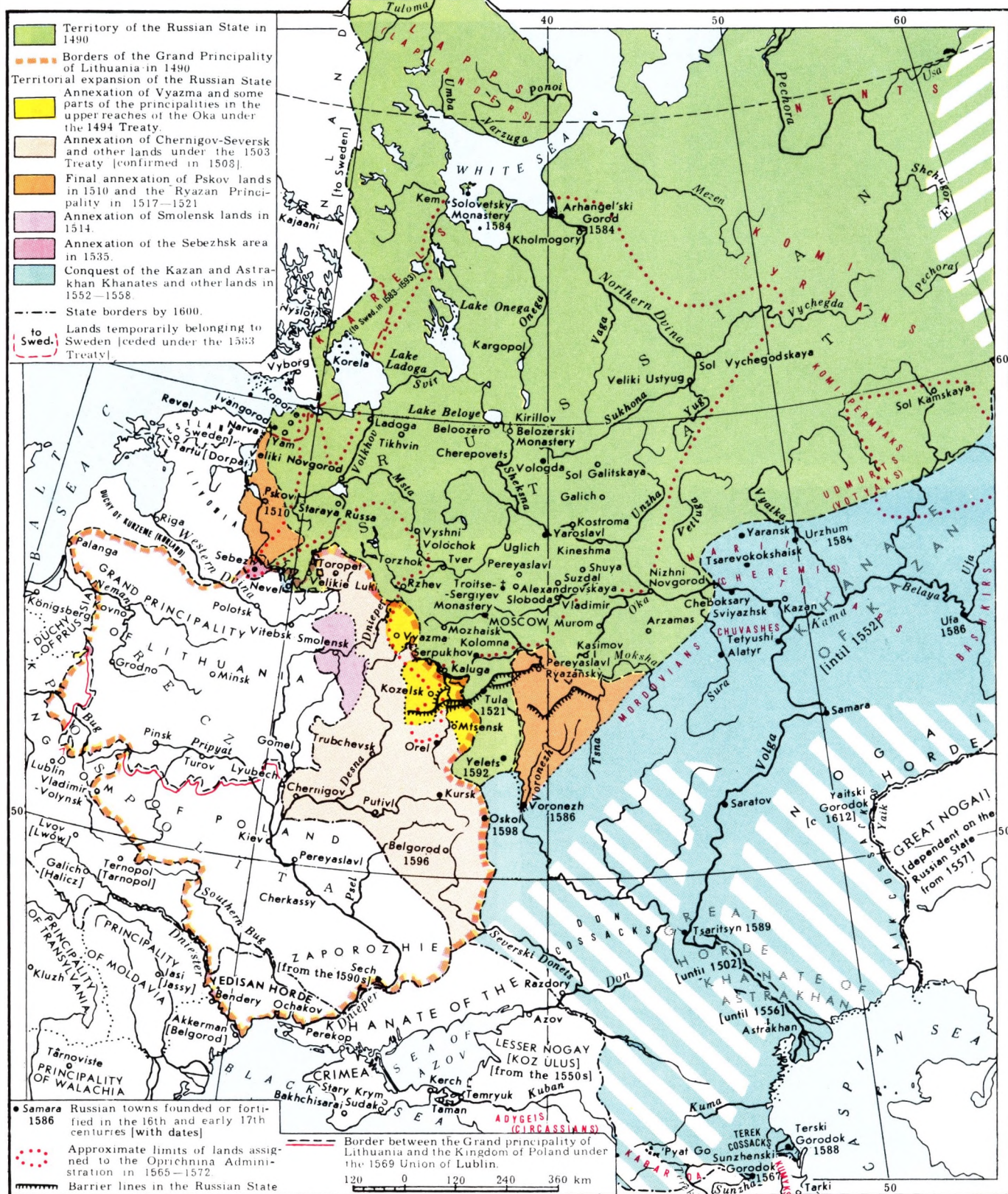
121. Chasuble embroidered with pearls. 15th century

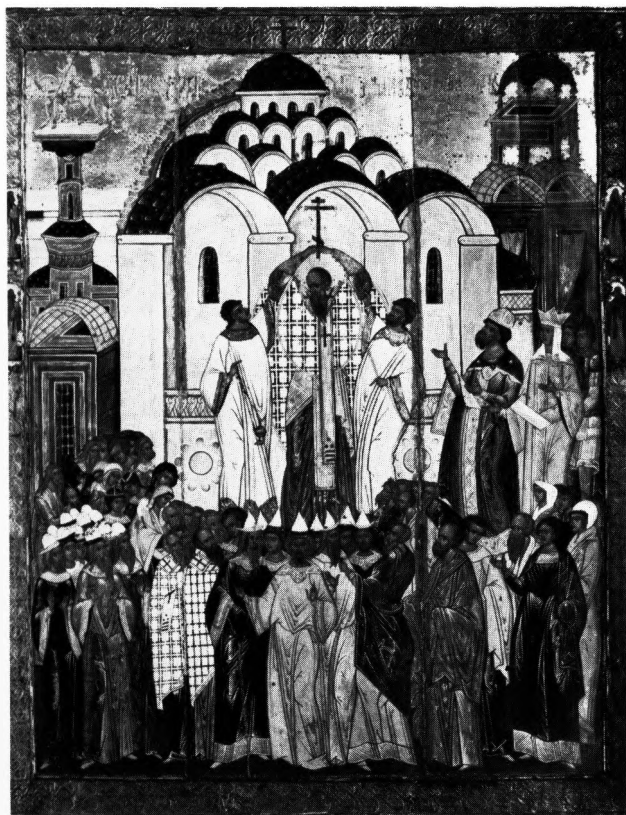
122. The *Zemsky Sobor* (National Assembly) seal. 16th century

123. Royal Gates. Wood carving. Detail. 16th century. Archangelsk

124. *St. John the Divine*. Moscow

THE RUSSIAN STATE IN THE 16TH AND EARLY 17TH CENTURIES



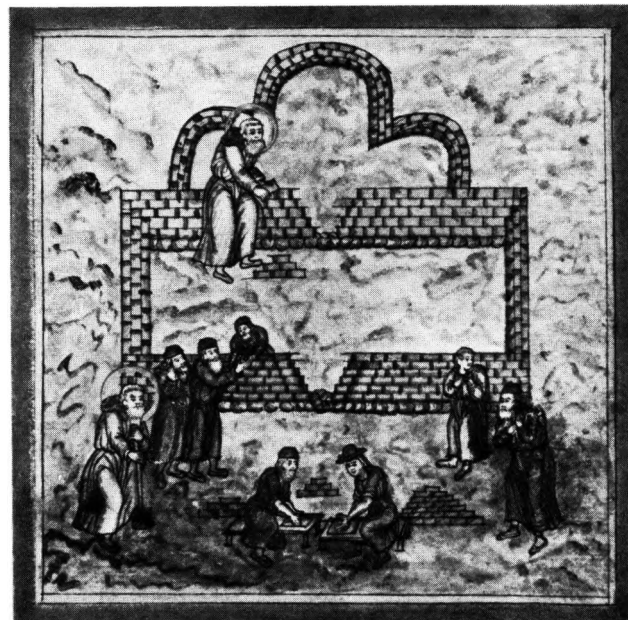


125. The cover of the Birev Gospel Book. 1531

126. *The Veneration of the Cross*. 16th century. Moscow

127. *The Martial Arts*. Miniature. Page of a manuscript. 16th century. Moscow





128. Daily life and work. Kneading Dough for the Bakery. Miniature. 17th century. Moscow

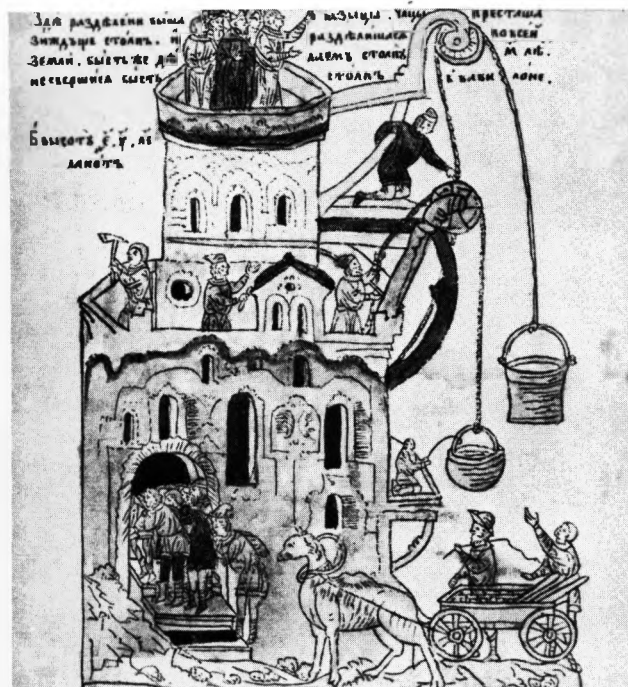
129. Daily life and work. Ploughing. Miniature. 17th century. Moscow

130. Dmitry Donskoi. Cathedral of St. Michael the Archangel. 17th century

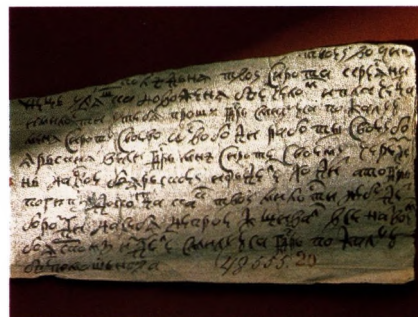
131. *Annunciation at the Well*. Icon. Moscow school. 17th century

132. Daily life and work. Building work. Miniature. 17th century. Moscow

133. Daily life and work. Building a town. Miniature. 17th century. Moscow







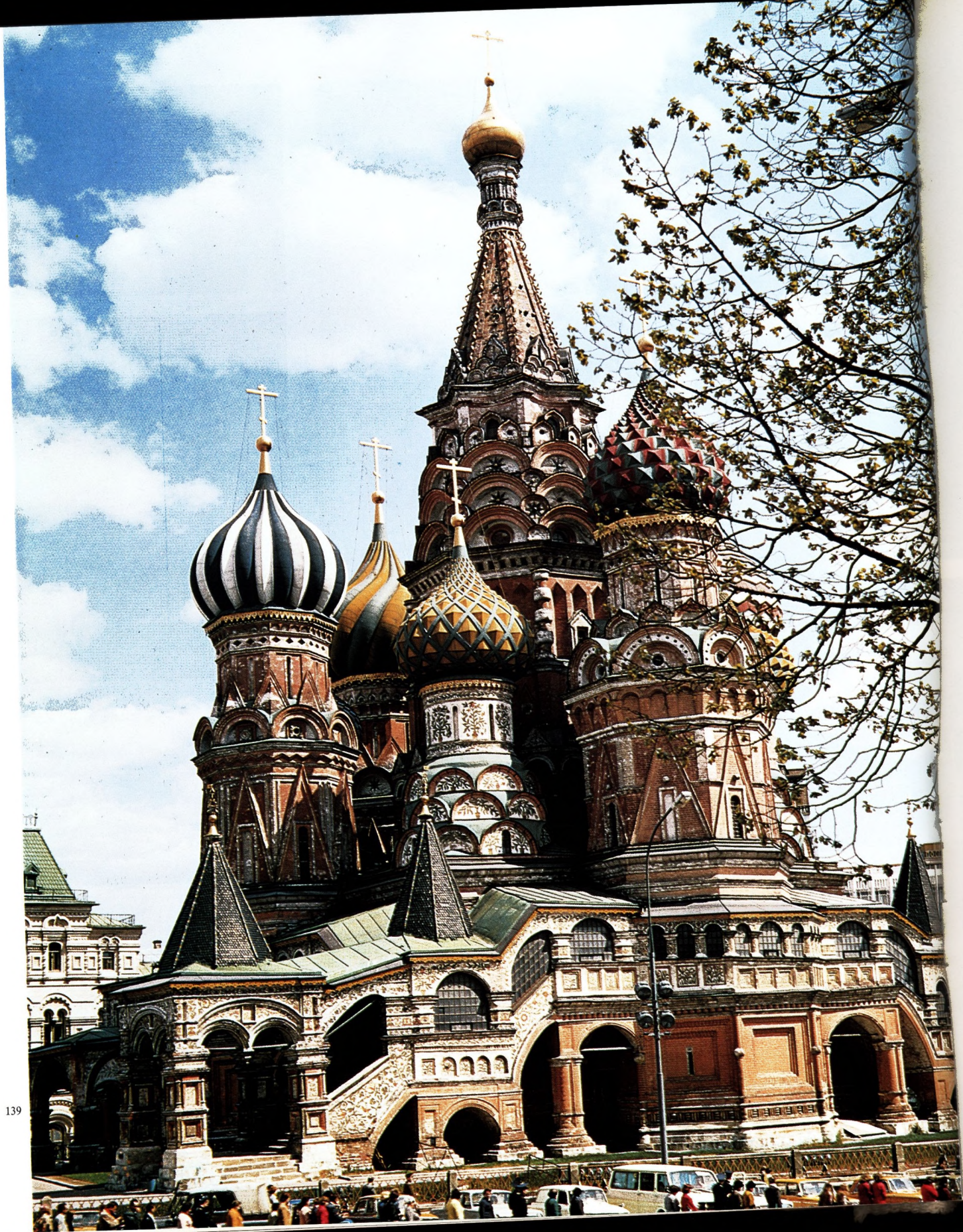
134. Church of the Epiphany.
1684. Yaroslavl

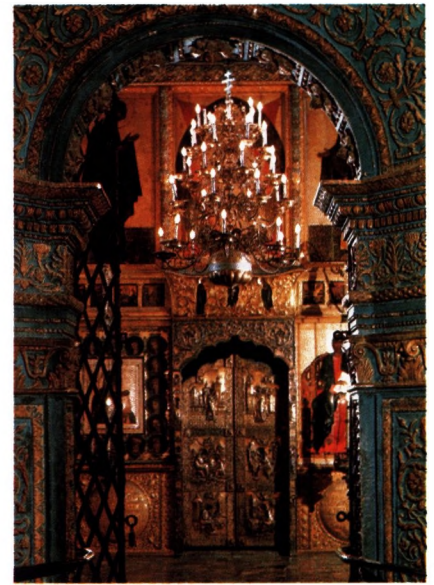
135. The Entry into Vologda of the
Dutch ambassador Van Kleenk in
1676. Engraving, 17th century.
Moscow

136. A Petition, 17th century

137. *The Nativity*. Icon.
Fragment. Moscow

138. Saddle, 17th century. The
Armoury, Moscow





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139. The Church of St. Basil the Blessed

140. Alexander Nevsky. Cathedral of St. Michael the Archangel. 17th century

141. Iconostasis. Cathedral of the Annunciation. The Kremlin. Moscow

142. Polished armour. The Armoury. Moscow

143. Diamond throne. The Armoury. Moscow



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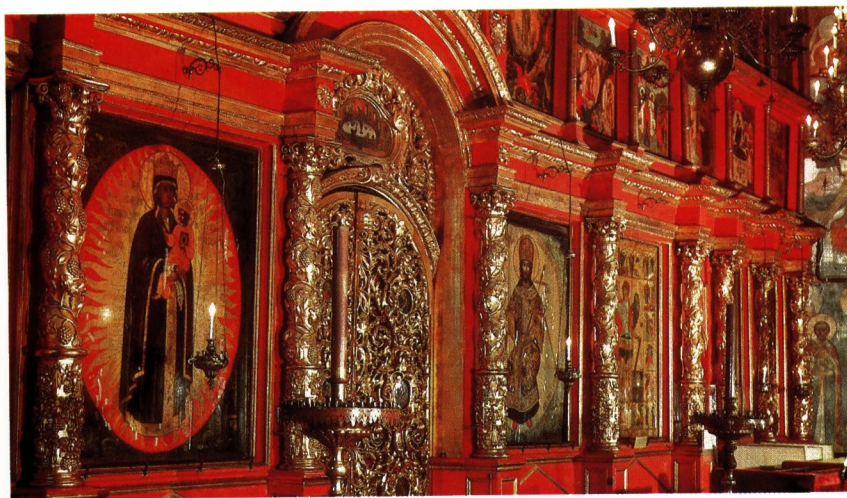




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144. Cathedral Square. The Kremlin. Moscow

145. The Hall of Facets. The Kremlin. Moscow

146. The Hall of Facets. Interior

147. Silver goblet depicting St. George. 15th-16th centuries

148. Iconostasis. Cathedral of St. Michael the Archangel. The Kremlin. Moscow

149. The Boyar Museum. *Svevlitsa* (main room)



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150. The Tsaritsa's seat. Cathedral of the Dormition. The Kremlin. Moscow

151. Chalice. Gold. 1677. Moscow

152. Goblet. Silver-gilt, engraved. 17th century

153. The Church of the Nativity. 1405. Zvenigorod

154. The Church of the Ascension. 1539. Kolomenskoye

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155. The Church of St. Demetrius, Vladimir

156. Zagorsk. General view

157. Iconostasis. The Church of the Dormition, 1559-1582. Zagorsk



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158. The Church of the Nativity. 13th century. Suzdal

159. The Church over the Gates. The Deposition of the Robe Monastery. 16th century. Suzdal

160. The western gates. Suzdal

161. The south portal. Suzdal



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162. Church of the Monastery of the Intercession. 16th-17th centuries. Suzdal

163. *Battle between Novgorod and Suzdal.* Detail. The Novgorod Museum

164. The fortress wall. 15th century. Novgorod

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165. The Church of the Saviour.
1374. Novgorod

166. *Battle between Novgorod and Suzdal*

167. *Battle between Novgorod and Suzdal*

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168. *Apostle*. Illumination with two figures. 14th century. Leningrad

169. The Church of St. Nicholas of Usokha. 1535. Pskov

170. Pskov. The Kremlin

171. The Church of the Assumption. St. Alexander Monastery. Uglich

172. The Exiled Bell. Uglich

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173. Eagle. Iran. 796-797

174. Kettle. 1163. Herat. Iran

175. Bowl. 13th century. Iran

176. Cup. 13th century. Iran

177. Vessel. Mountain crystal. 10th-11th centuries. Egypt

178. Dish. Second half of the 16th century. Iznik, Turkey

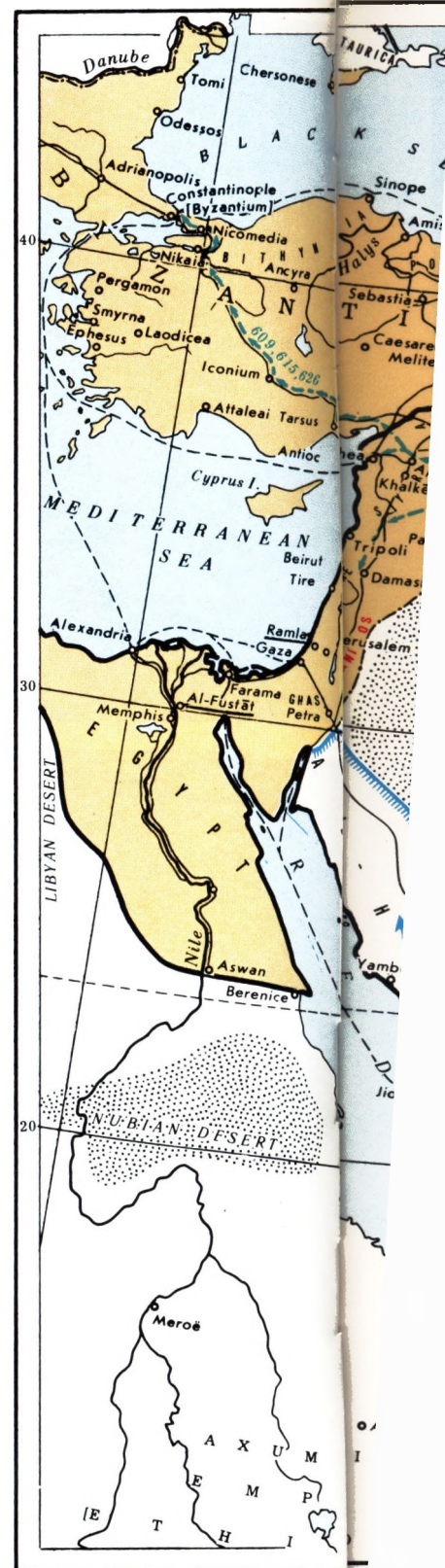
179. Drinking horn. 14th century. Syria

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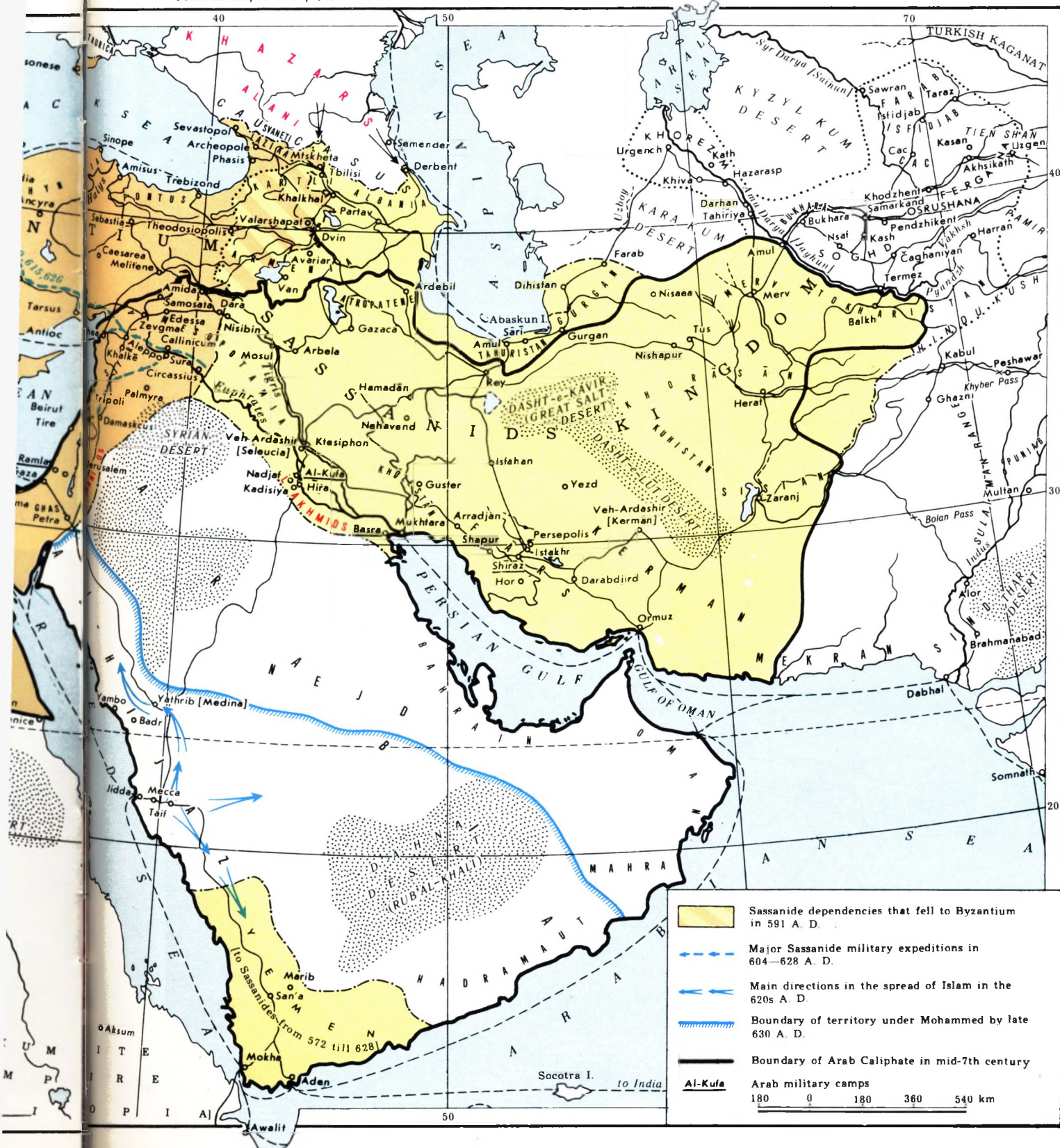
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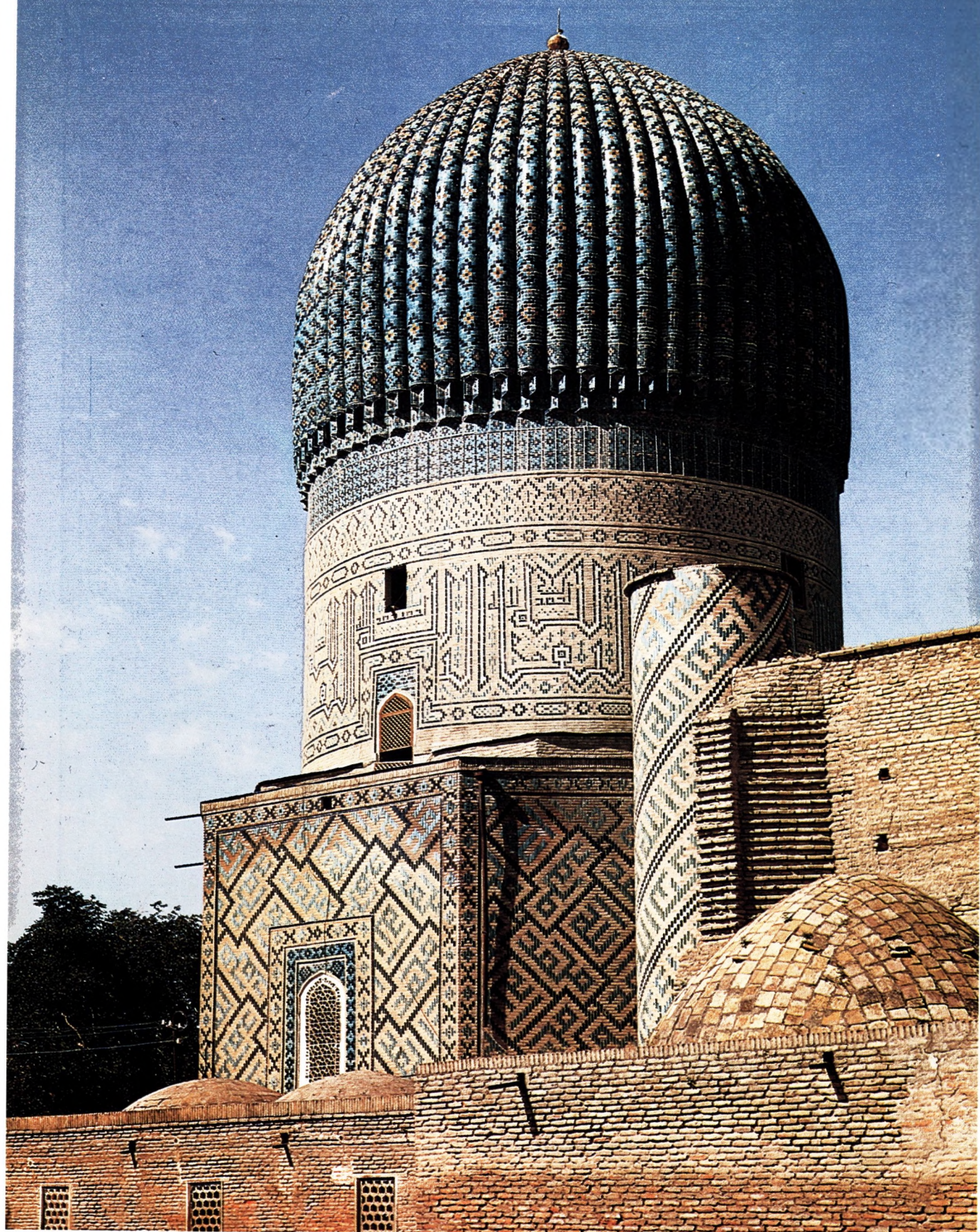


180. Wall painting in a Buddhist temple. 8th-9th centuries. Eastern Turkestan



ARABIA, IRAN, CENTRAL ASIA 6th-FIRST HALF OF 7th CENTURY







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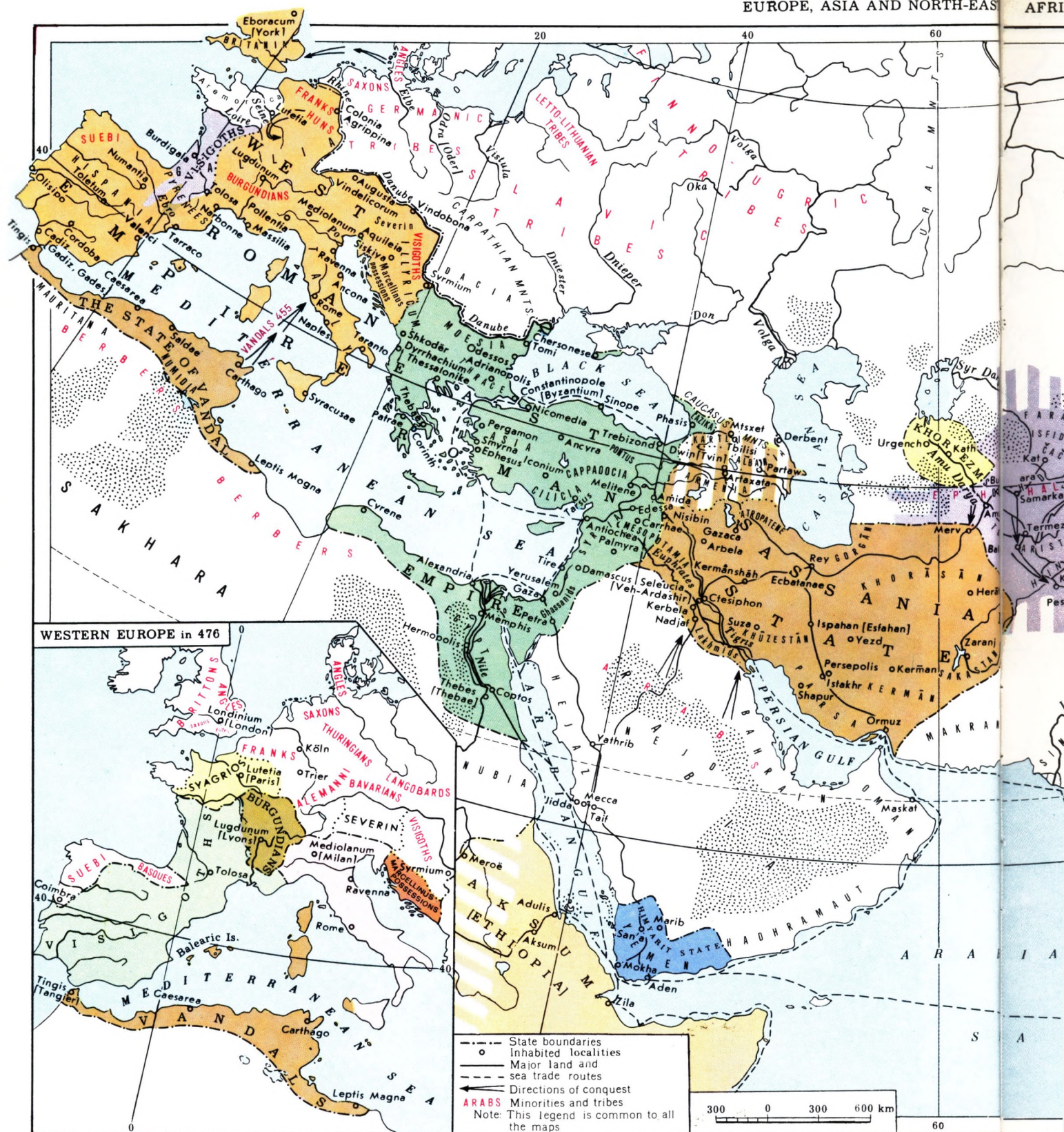


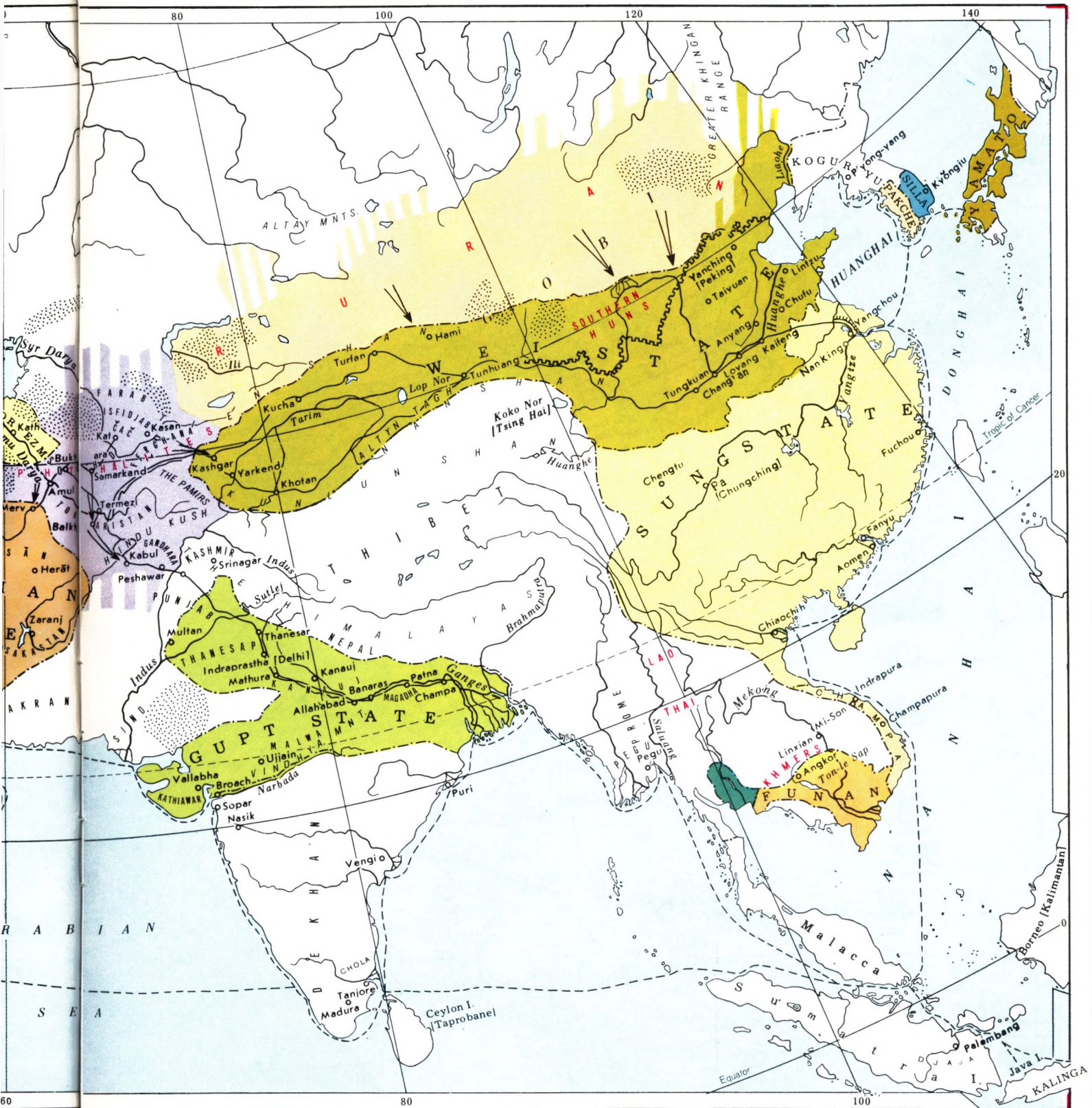
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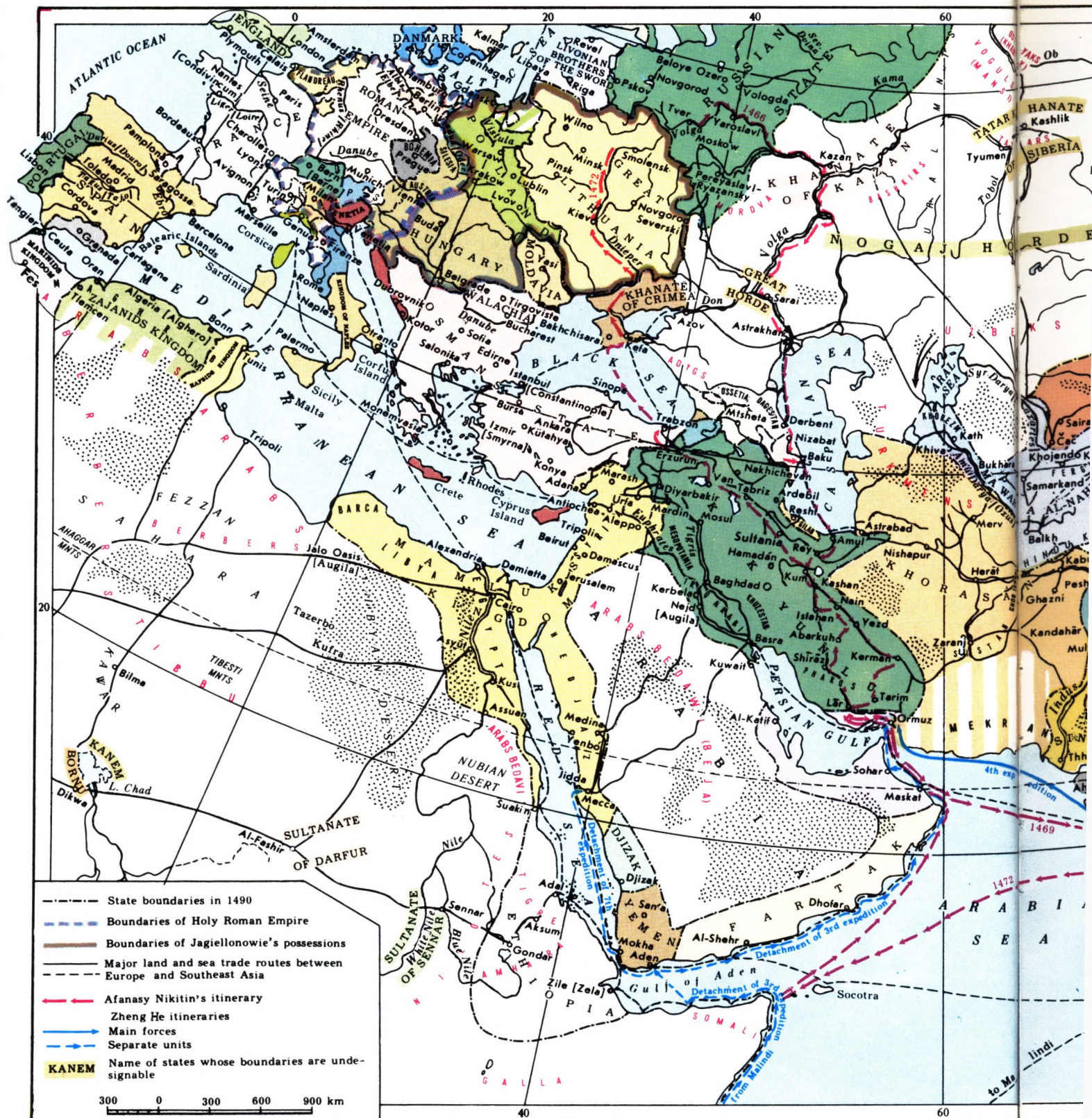
181. Gur Emir. 15th century.
Samarkand

182. Reghistan Square. 16th-17th
centuries. Samarkand

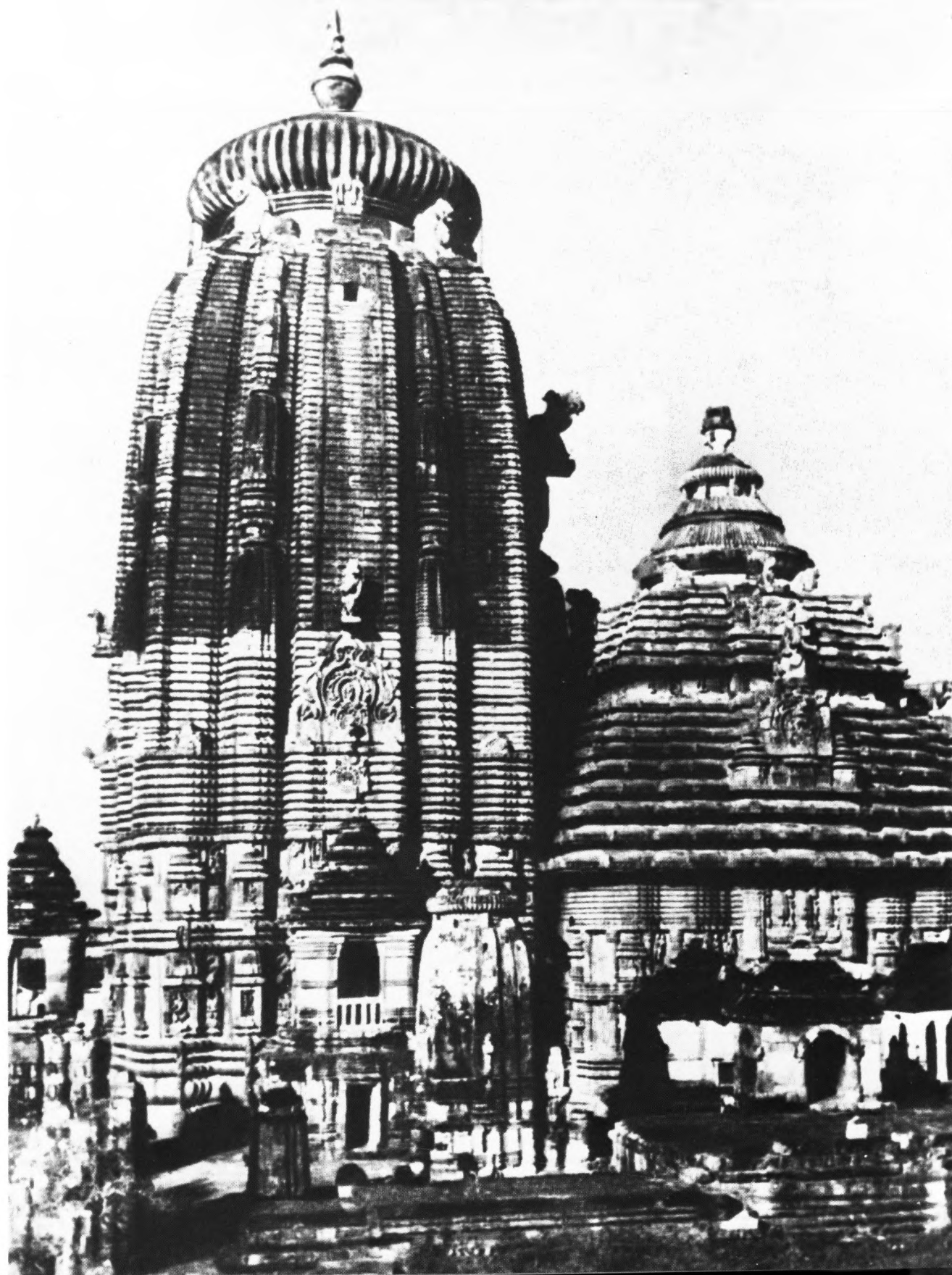
183. Vase. 16th-17th centuries. Iran













184. The Lingaradj temple in Bhubaneswar. 9th century

185. *Apsari* (heavenly dancers). Fresco in a cave temple in Ajanta. 7th century

186. Head of the Buddha. Clay. Ajinatepe. 8th century

187. *The Buddha Riding an Elephant*. 13th century



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188. A Girl Going to Keep a Rendezvous. Miniature. 15th century

189. Stone carving of a mother and child. Khajuraho. 10th century

190. *Emperor Babūr in the Camp.* Miniature

191. *Woman Playing a Ball.* Khajuraho
Stone. 10th century

192. *Melody.* Miniature

193. *Emperor Babūr in the Jahan-ara garden.* Miniature. 16th century



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INDIA 16th — MID 17th CENTURY





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194. Detail of a pile carpet. 17th century. India

195. *Shiva and Pārvatī*. Rajput school. Miniature. 12th century



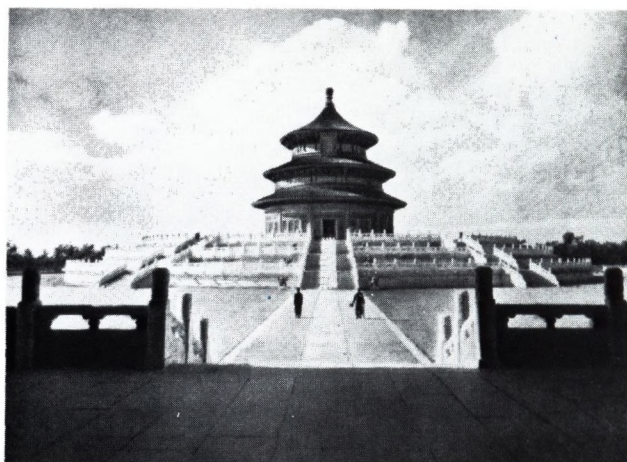
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201. Dong Fang Suo with a peach. Carved ivory. 16th century

202. *Reading Scholar and a Buffalo*. Ink on silk. 14th century

203. Ch'iu Ying. *Landscape*. 16th century

196. Vase on a wooden stand. China. K'ang-hsi reign. 1662-1722

197. Vase in the form of a peach tree stump. 18th century. China

198. Dish. China. K'ang-hsi reign. 1662-1722

199. One of the structures of the Temple of Heaven. Peking. Late Ching dynasty. 15th century

200. Donghuang, guardian of the Li-Shi temple treading the demon under his foot. Tang dynasty





凭江岷嶺芙蓉起萬壑爭流
水映門鷄犬一方塵跡遠杜陵
花竹讓雲村 陸治



204. Yun Shou-p'ing. *Peony*. Mid-17th century

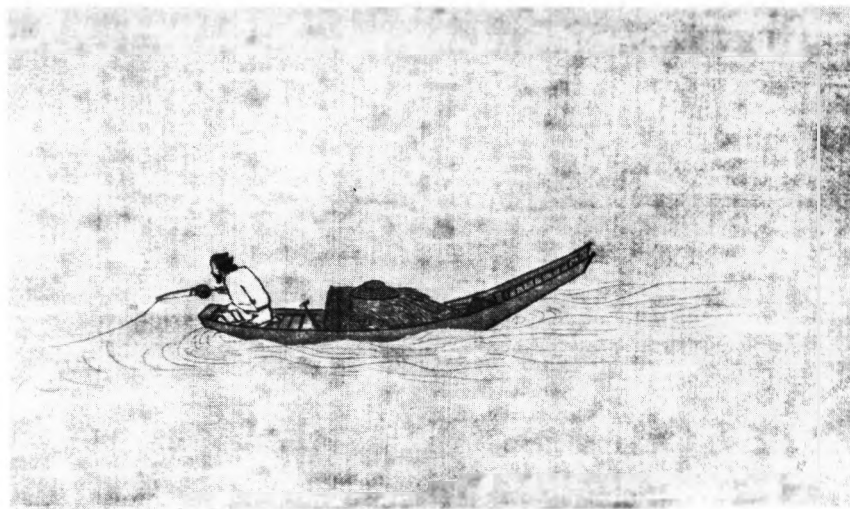
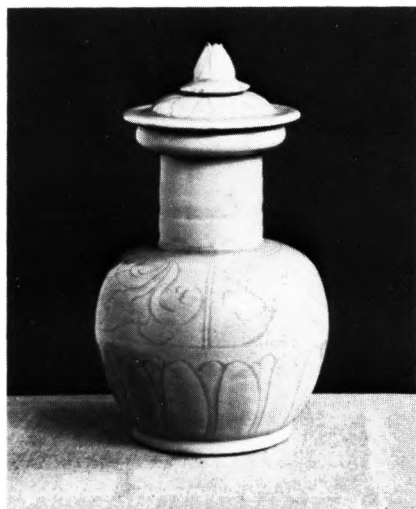
205. *An Old Man Collecting Herbs*

206. Bodhisattva. Marble. Tang dynasty

207. Lu Chih (1496-1576). *Angler-hermit*

208. Hilt of a dagger. 14th century

209. Unknown artist. *Eight Horses*. 13th century





210. Vessel of the ts'un type. Lung-ch'üan ware. Sung period

211. Ma Yüan. *Angler*. Detail of a hand scroll. Ink on silk. 12th century

212. Relief, Galloping Horse. Emperor T'ai-tsung's shrine in Shian. 7th century

213. Yün Shou-p'ing. *Carnation Bush and Three Butterflies*. Mid-17th century

214. Colossal statue of the Buddha Vairocana. Lung mên. Hunan. Tang dynasty. Ht 18 m. 7th century

215. Chu Die-jung. *Scholar under Pine-trees*. 14th century

216. Donghuang. Detail of wall painting, 6th century

217. Hsü Wei. *Flowers and Fruits*. 16th century



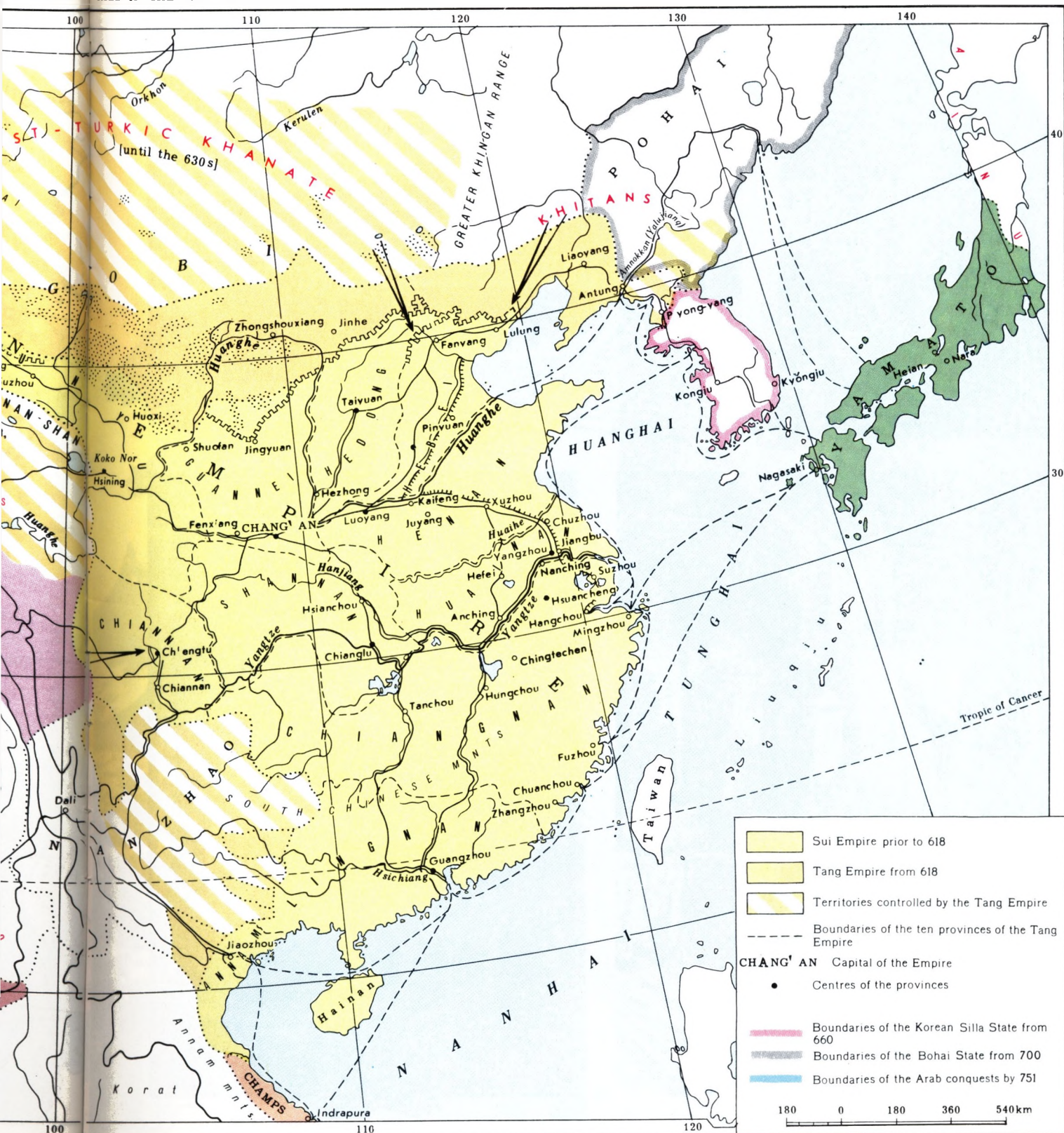
MING EMPIRE 16th — EARLY 17th CENTURY

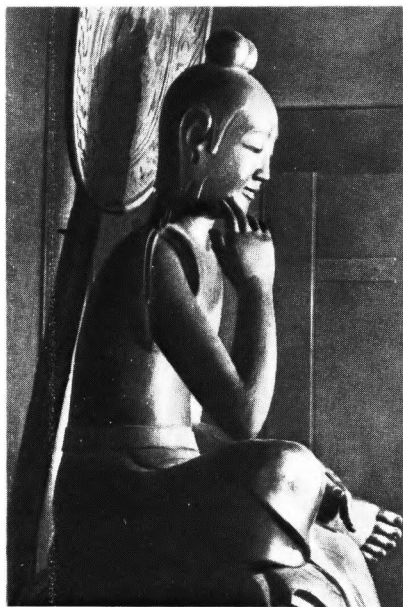




218. The Ta-yen (Great Gander) pagoda. General view. Shian. 7th century









219. The goddess Miroku Bosatsu. Chūguji temple, Nara. 7th century

220. Kondō (main hall) of the Miroji temple, Nara. 9th century

221. The Yakushi Triad in the Yakushiji. Nara. 8th century

222. The altar of the Chūsonji temple, Hiraizumi. 11th century

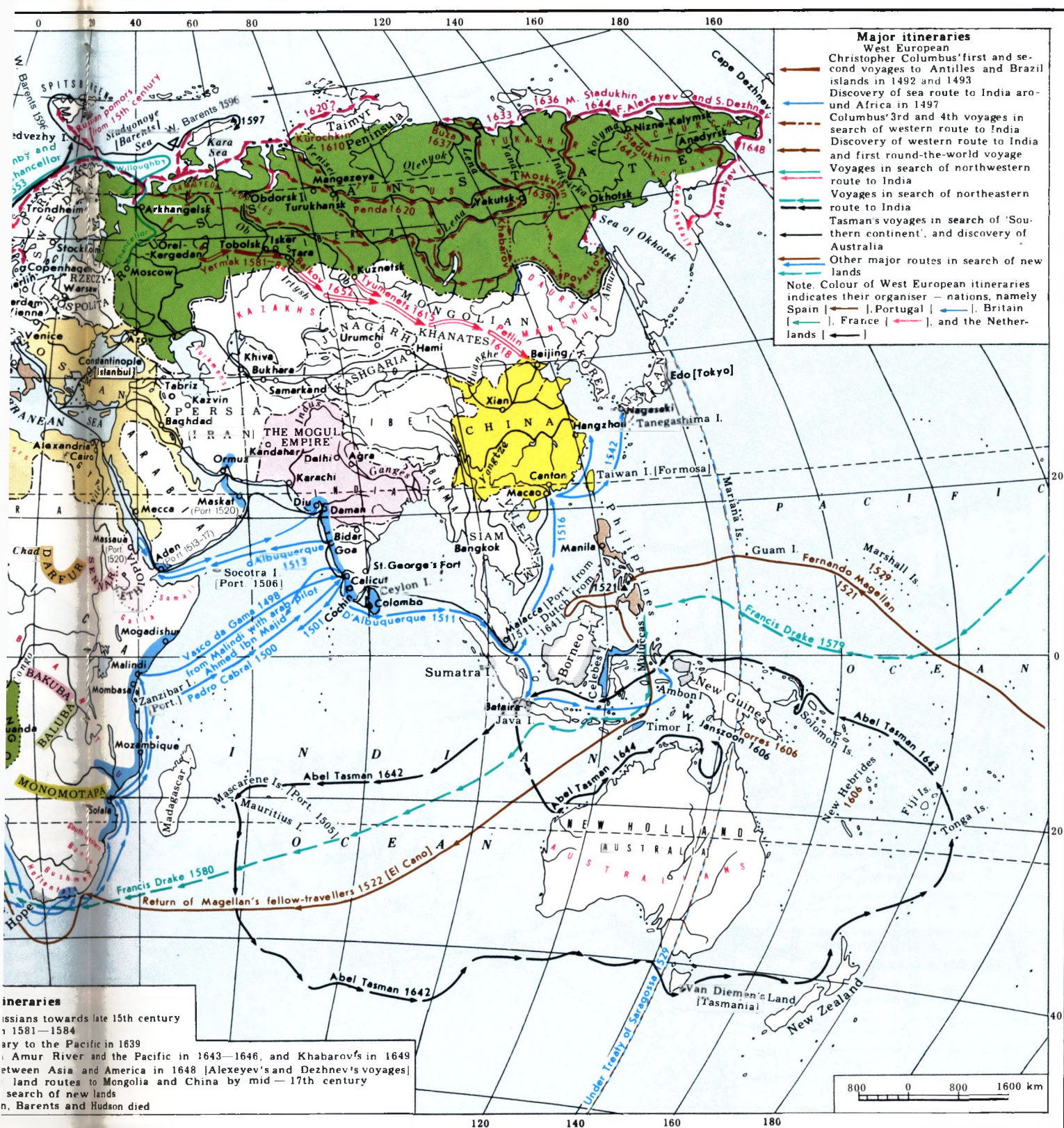
223. Yakushiji. The east pagoda. Nara. 7th-8th centuries

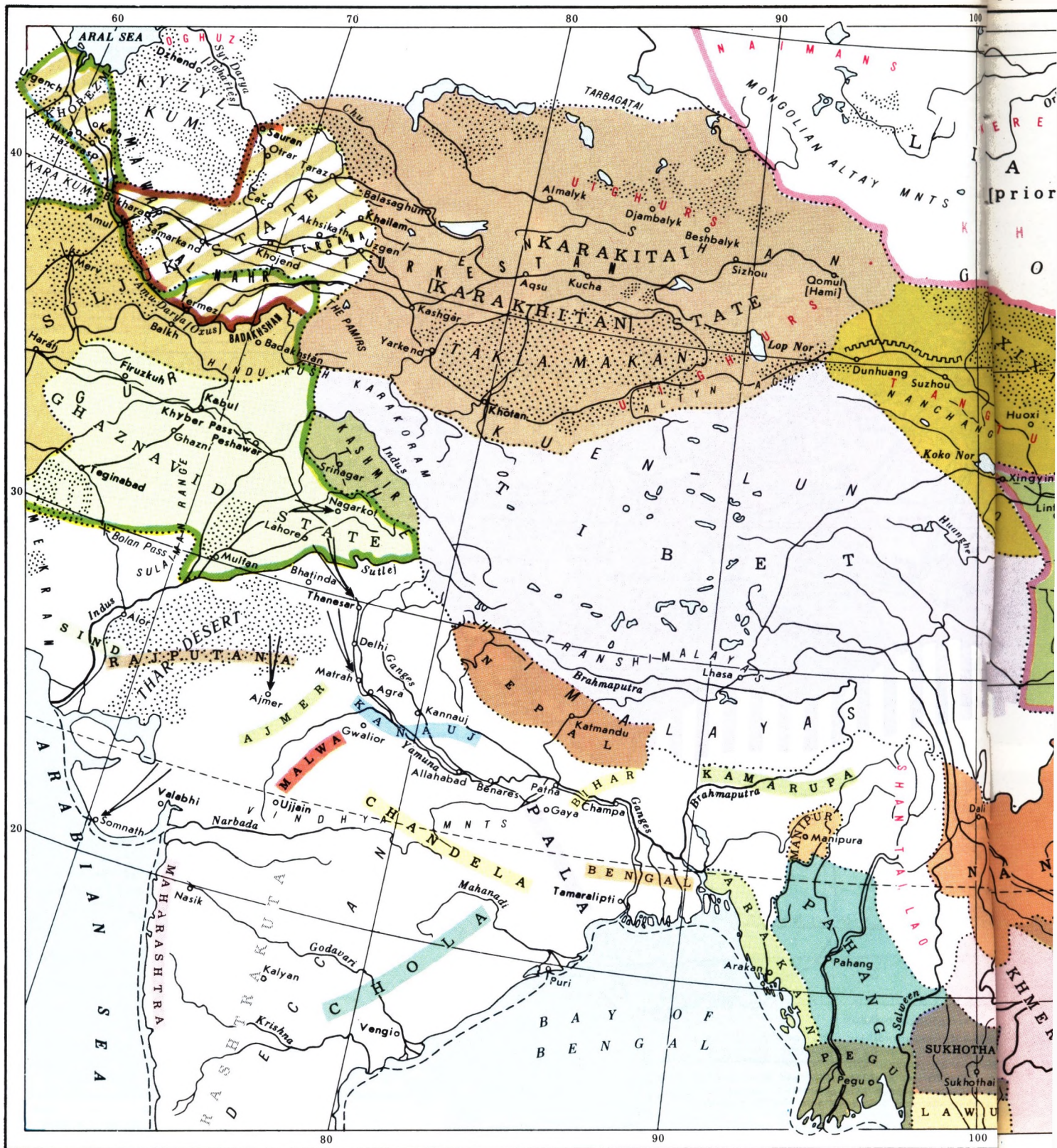
224. Kichijōten (goddess of good luck). The Jōruriji temple, Kyoto. 12th century





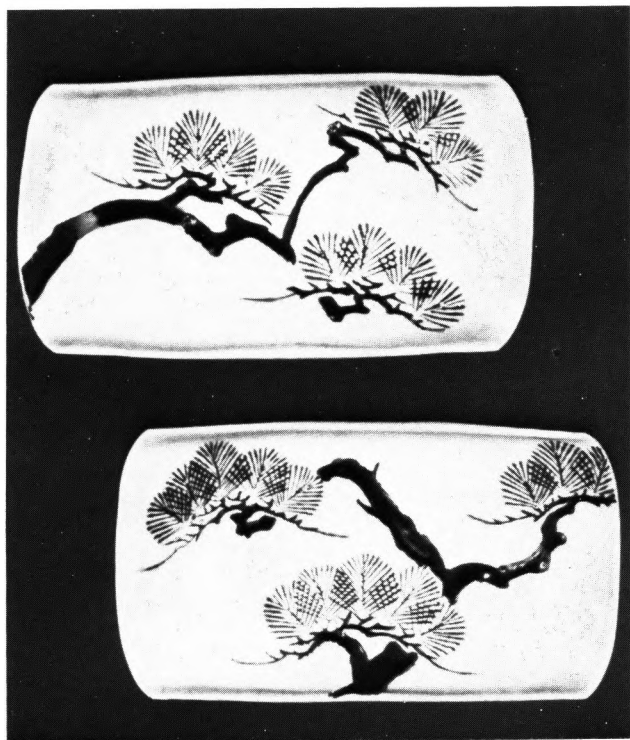
COLONIAL SEIZURES LATE 15TH — FIRST HALF OF 17TH CENTURIES





ADJACENT COUNTRIES 11th — FIRST HALF OF 12th CENTURY







225. Ceramic articles. 16th-17th centuries

226. Detail of *fusumae* (picture drawn on a movable room partition) from the Zen monastery. Kyoto. 15th-16th centuries

227. A section of the Gengi Monogatari scroll (Tale of Gengi). 12th century

228. Detail of *fusuma-e* from the Zen monastery. Kyoto. 16th-17th centuries

229. Byōdōin. The Hōōdō (Phoenix Hall). Uji. 9th century

230. Portrait-statue of patriarch Muō Kokushi. Kamakura period. 13th century

231. Interior of the Zen monastery Kanzenji. 16th-17th centuries

232. Interior of the Daido Fukidera temple. Kyushu. 11th-12th centuries





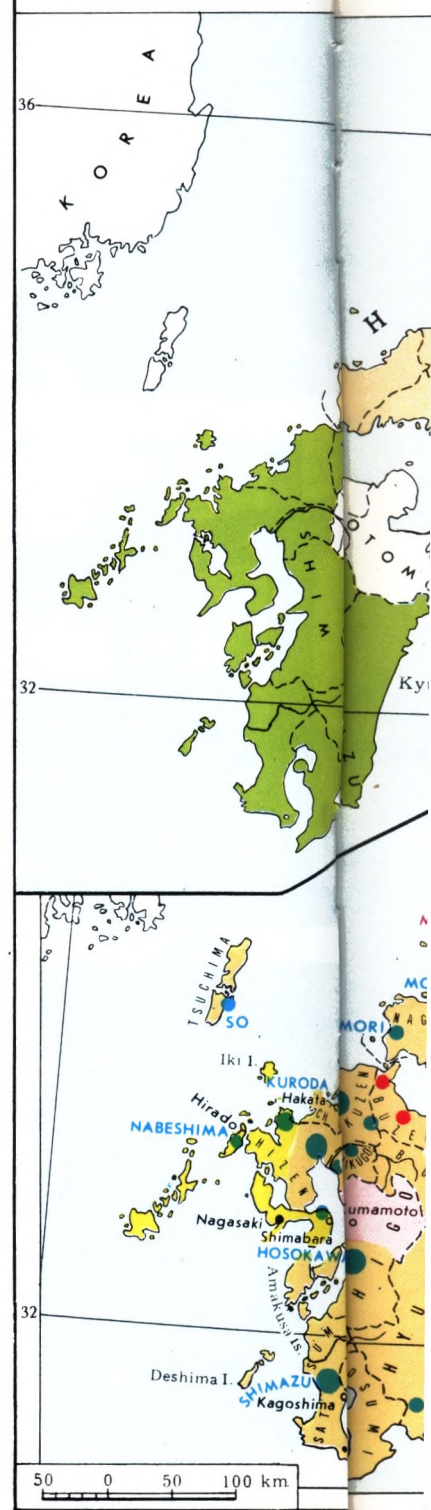
233. Zen monk Muṣō Kokushi.
Wood, 16th century

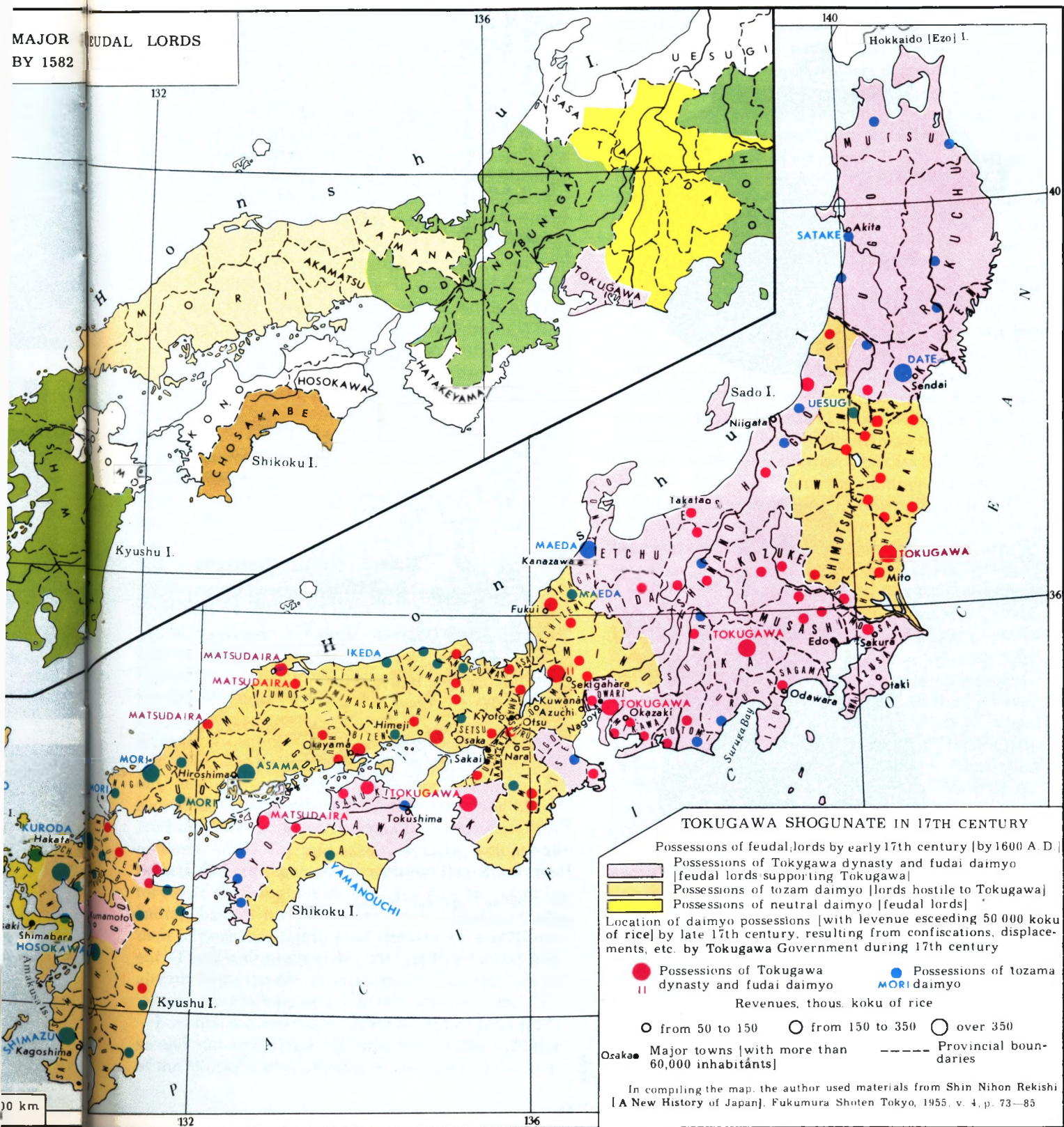
234. Box for writing materials. Hana-no
Shirakaba. Wood, lacquer. 15th century



234

POSSESSIONS OF MAJOR FEUDAL BY 1582



MAJOR FEUDAL LORDS
BY 1582



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雲在古
 山色漸
 漸江
 通一
 晚
 龍山水
 不心微
 雲半岩
 雲半岩
 數
 五年在任海崎寺
 敬題青螺對珠山
 畫大仁人添一筆
 蕭於看秋坐松間
 何嚴
 中江
 芝江
 一
 同
 一曲清江一草廬
 蘭舟竹榻世營
 跡白蘋洲秀晚烟
 外紫翠山群秋雨
 餘寄傲瓶頭伴獨
 鳥卜歸來擬學棋
 漁隱淪多為明時
 出獨去喜高人能
 逐初
 遠江僧梵鼎



237

235. Pot for the tea ceremony. 16th-17th centuries

236. The Tōji temple. The Shinto god Hachiman. Kyoto. 9th century

237. Shūbun. *Landscape*. Ink on paper. 15th century

ple and made a sacred pond. The fifth *Guru*, Arjan (1581-1606), made the Sikhs' lands subject to a household tax which was levied from the whole population.

The accession of his son, Jahangir, on Akbar's death in 1605 was marked by a deviation from the policy of religious tolerance. This caused discontent among the Hindu *jagirdars* and part of the Muslims who had raised the revolt that had been headed by Jahangir's son, Khusraw. Khusraw was given financial support by *Guru Arjan*, but his troops were defeated. All his supporters, including Arjan, were put to death and Khusraw himself was blinded. The new *Guru*, Har Govind, instructed all Sikhs to prepare for armed conflict with the Moghuls. When invited to Jahangir he put all his forces at the latter's disposal, but soon afterwards Jahangir threw him into prison for many years. The Moghul governors in the Punjab sent frequent punitive expeditions against the Sikhs, but the latter were good soldiers and could not be subdued. They were equally unsuccessful in putting an end to the Afghan anti-Moghul movement led by the Roshans who lived in the mountains between India and Kabul and against whom Akbar had also unsuccessfully sent troops.

Jahangir annexed a number of independent principalities—Mewar, Kangra and Kishtwar, but the Moghul invasion of Assam ended in defeat and the destruction of the Moghul army and fleet. In clashes with colonial powers of Europe Jahangir supported the British and Dutch against the Portuguese. The English Ambassador, Thomas Roe, who lived in Agra for three years, left a valuable diary of the period. The wars in the Deccan were long and drawn out, lasting from 1609 to 1620, and although the capital of Ahmadnagar was taken by the Moghuls in 1621 and part of the territory of the state went over to them, while Bijapur and Golconda which had helped Ahmadnagar paid tributes, this small victory cost the Moghuls dearly. For the first time in Indian history mercenary soldiers, *Marathi*, made their appearance fighting on the side of Ahmadnagar. These mountain tribes during this period had already begun to see themselves as a single people in its own developing national self-consciousness.

For his victory over Ahmadnagar Jahangir's second son was given the title *Shah Jahan* ("Ruler of the World") and appointed governor of the rich

state of Gujarat. But Jahangir's chief wife, Nur Jahan, who virtually ruled the country since Jahangir had to all intents and purposes surrendered himself to wine and opium, supported another of his sons. With the revenues from Gujarat Shah Jahan gathered a great army and broke out in revolt, but was defeated by Jahangir's general, Mahabat Khan. Though he received a pardon he was deprived of Gujarat and was given in exchange a small *jagir* in the Deccan. Mahabat Khan fell into disfavour and in a clash at camp between Muslims and *Rajputs* his guard, 2000 *Rajputs*, were killed and he was forced to flee to Shah Jahan, who on the death of his father in 1628 had ascended the throne.

In wealth and grandeur Shah Jahan's court surpassed all those of previous rulers. In the main cities of the empire magnificent buildings were erected made from white marble encrusted with semi-precious stones, the most famous being the Taj Mahal at Agra. The cost of all this was enormous. The imperial army was enlarged, but its fighting power declined. On expeditions the number of carters and servants far exceeded the number of soldiers.

Wars in the Deccan and the increases in taxation that were made to cover the state's expenditure resulted in a terrible famine in Gujarat and the Deccan. In the Deccan, torn apart as it was by wars, it was the rural population which suffered the most, but in Gujarat where 3 million died it was the town dwellers, particularly the craftsmen. Gujarat gradually began to lose its importance as an economic centre, yielding its place to Bengal. In the 17th century the Portuguese established themselves in Bengal and took virtually complete control of the flourishing town and port of Hooghly. In 1632 Shah Jahan stormed Hooghly after a long siege and 4000 Portuguese prisoners were sent to Agra. Only those who accepted the Islamic faith were spared, the rest were executed.

Shah Jahan believed the subjugation of the Deccan was one of his most important political objectives. He even moved his capital to Burhanpur to be nearer to the scene of the fighting. Ahmadnagar lost its independence in 1632 and in 1636 Bijapur and Golconda recognized themselves as vassals of the Moghul Empire with obligations to pay tribute and yearly taxes. The Deccan was heavily devastated.

Aurangzeb, the second of Shah Jahan's four sons, was made governor of the Deccan. To regulate the

collection of taxes in a country that had been badly ruined his *divan*, head of the state taxation department, Murshid Kuli Khan, introduced a preferential tax system which became known as the *dhara* of Murshid Kuli Khan. The peasants were encouraged to take up holdings on the waste land by the offer of financial payments, *takavi*. Lower taxes were also introduced for payment from the irrigated lands. The overall sum to be levied was established through talks between the state officials and the peasants, i. e. account was taken of the peasants' ability to pay their taxes. Although apart from their basic land tax the peasants had another 14 different taxes to pay, the *dhara* of Murshid Kuli Khan gradually led to a revival of farming in the Deccan.

Shah Jahan had to put down rebellions in Bengal and Doab instigated by the separatist feudal lords and so-called "bandits" who were in fact fugitive peasants. In the Punjab the Sikhs continued to entrench themselves despite three punitive expeditions undertaken against them by Shah Jahan. These revolts and rebellions resulted in a reduction in the treasury income, a situation that was not made any better by Golconda's failure to pay its taxes. A distinctive feature of the system operating in Golconda at that time was the fact that almost all its land and other taxes were farmed out. This made it possible for the rich tax-farmers to become high officials. One such tax farmer, who became head of the finance department of Golconda and is known to history under this title, became the virtual ruler of the state, but fearing disgrace secretly went over to the Moghuls. Moghul troops entered the capital of Golconda, and part of the territory of that country went over to them, but the population was forced to pay a large tribute. This was the beginning of the decline of Golconda.

It was at about this time that a false rumour was spread about the death of Shah Jahan and his four sons began a struggle for the throne, since India had no law of primogeniture. Two years later this struggle ended with the victory of Aurangzeb, a fanatic Muslim, who used not so much force as cunning and cruelty.

The decline of the Moghul Empire. The accession of Aurangzeb signified the coming to power of more reactionary *jagirdar* circles. A cool, calculating politician, Aurangzeb was a fanatic Muslim, who pursued a harsh policy against the Hindus

and the Muslim Shi'ites. He not only reintroduced the *jizyah*, banned Hindus from wearing the marks of distinction and from riding on elephants, and ordered the destruction of the Hindu temples and the building of stone mosques in their place, he also banned wine, painting, music and dancing as being against the tenets of Islam. This led to extreme discontent among the Hindu population and together with the ever worsening economic situation resulted in continued revolts not only on the part of the *Hindu Marathi*, the *Rajputs* and the *Jats*, but also by the Muslim Afghans. A number of the Indian peoples were beginning to feel a sense of national identity, and they looked upon the Moghul state as something alien and oppressive that frequently insulted their religious feelings. During his long reign (1658-1707) Aurangzeb was continually at war, sending his troops to the north and east to crush the uprisings that were continually breaking out. But at the same time the fighting power of the Moghul army grew continually less. Military commanders and civil servants, on the other hand, became more and more in number and there was no longer sufficient land left to grant them as *jagir*. Taxes had risen from one-third of the harvest that they were under Akbar to one-half. In many places the peasants could not afford to farm and had to quit their holdings. The burden of tax arrears fell upon those who remained as the principle of collective responsibility was more and more applied. Famines continually struck in one or another part of the country. The incomes of the *jagirdars* were sharply reduced and more and more they wanted grants from the treasury, not *jagirs*.

After many years of struggle against Jat, Afghan and *Rajput* insurrections Aurangzeb was able to put them down, but despite winning a few battles and destroying a number of fortresses he could not in the end overcome either the Marathi or the Sikhs. A small princeling named Shivaji stood at the head of the *Marathi* and turned them into a very capable cavalry, which was famed for the speed of its manoeuvres. It avoided large engagements, but attacked individual Moghul units and then disappeared with lightning speed carrying off its booty. Shivaji's army was also available for hire, but the Marathi troops were paid by the state, not by their commanders. After spending 8 months of the year in the march, the army on its return home in the rainy sea-

son was obliged to surrender all that it had plundered to the state. The plunder was then shared out among the soldiers and their officers with each being given a fixed amount according to his rank and the rest going into the state treasury. In Maharashtra (i. e. those provinces inhabited by the majority of the Marathi) Shivaji fixed a comparatively low tax to be levied from the peasants.

In 1674 Shivaji was crowned at Poona as ruler of the independent Marathi State. In 1677 he invaded Karnatik. Gangs of marauders and robbers followed in the wake of his army plundering the population of what little was left. The Marathi had barely become independent themselves when they began subduing other peoples. Shivaji's comrades-in-arms fought for the national and religious liberation of their people without regard for material benefits; by serving the Moghuls they would have earned considerably more. But once they had acquired land and power they became ordinary feudal lords. Conflicts broke out among them which sometimes ended in bloody clashes.

From a sectarian trend among the merchant and crafts population of the time Sikhism gradually became the antifeudal ideology of the Punjab peasants. The tenth Sikh *Guru*, Govind, declared that henceforth all the *Guru's* power would be transferred to the Sikh community as a whole. A Sikh should renounce all his former caste or religious ties and recognize only the community of other Sikhs (who should wear marks of distinction to distinguish them from Hindus and Muslims). The Sikhs became sufficiently powerful to constitute a serious threat to the power of the Moghuls in the Punjab. Although Govind was defeated in 1708 and captured and killed, the struggle of the Sikhs continued.

Aurangzeb died at the age of 89 while on the way back from an expedition against the Marathi. His last letters to his sons are full of grief: "My life, this divine treasure, has passed in vain". Not a magnificent mausoleum stands above his grave near Daulatabad, but a simple stele in white marble bearing an inscription.

The decline of the empire which began during the reign of Aurangzeb accelerated after his death. His descendents rapidly replaced each other on the throne and thought no longer of the state, but of their own pleasures. Behind them the real governing

was done by the changing court cliques. The magnificent court and the upkeep of the army required enormous resources. The peasants were stripped of everything over and above the fixed tax rates. The farmers deserted their fields and fled to avoid paying taxes. They would either join the army or form their own bands which would rob and plunder even as close as the suburbs of Delhi.

More and more provinces fell away from the empire. In 1713 Murshid Kuli Khan, the governor of Bengal, virtually became an independent ruler with his new capital at Murshidabad. From 1714 to 1718 he annexed Bihar and Orissa. Bengal at the time was one of the most economically developed provinces of India growing various types of rice, cotton and sugar-cane. Cloth, both cheap and valuable, was produced for the Bengalese court and the nobility. Land taxes were farmed out and the *zamindars*, or tax-farmers, collected them with the aid of their own armed detachments. They meted out justice and punishments to the local population and bribed the government officials. The *zamindars'* estates, like private feudal possessions, became hereditary.

Jagat Seth, a wealthy banker from Marva, who had on many occasions given loans to Murshid Kuli Khan, moved to Bengal where he was given the right to mint money and where he enjoyed considerable political influence. He was linked with the English East-India Company which exported vast amounts of cloth from Bengal.

Another Moghul governor, Asaf Jah, also founded an independent state, Haidarabad, with a capital of the same name sited near the fortress of Golconda in the Deccan. There social and economic relations remained as they had been under the Moghuls.

Despite a number of defeats the Sikhs settled in the Punjab where they could not be put down. The last blow to the Moghul Empire was delivered by Shah Nadir, the ruler of Iran, who invaded India in 1739 and plundered Delhi totally. He soon left, but in 1747 the Afghans formed an independent state and their ruler, Shah Ahmad, invaded India five times. But the greatest resistance he was faced with was not the Moghul army, but the Sikhs. Meanwhile the Marathi overran the vast areas of Central India and an alliance was formed between their various principalities—Nagpur, Gwalior, Indore and

India

Baroda—with its centre at Poona. To all intents and purposes the Marathi had an empire, but one that was less centralized than the Moghul Empire at its zenith. As they became increasingly more powerful the Marathi began to move north. Here they came up against the forces of Shah Ahmad. The Afghans and the Marathi met in 1761 in a decisive battle at Panipat, a battle that was fought for the control of India. The Marathi were completely defeated and many of their finest generals were killed. But the victory had cost Shah Ahmad dearly and he returned to Afghanistan to reinforce his depleted army. Once there, however, feudal strife broke out and the Afghans never invaded India again. The Moghul rulers had lost all their real power. The centre of all economic activity had finally been transferred from the war-torn Agra-Delhi region to Bengal and southern India. The whole country had been bled white and could offer no serious resistance to the European colonialists.

Meanwhile the European East India companies had become firmly established in India. They usually had the support of their governments in Europe, which since they rivalled one another, meant that economic competition was fought out not so much between individual concerns as between the governments of their countries. The European companies usually passed through the following stages of formation: first a stronghold was established on the Indian coast with a store for the goods that were kept there till the arrival (once or twice a year) of a ship from Europe; then the trading posts were strengthened and the weavers who worked for the companies would settle around them. The companies had their own forces and their own fleets. They set up their own courts. They bought up local villages so that from being a trading post such a company developed into a kind of principality, although all the trading posts belonging to one European nation were generally administered from one centre on Indian territory. Later such a company began to interfere in the affairs of the neighbouring Indian principalities, supporting its puppets, fighting with its European rivals and virtually acting like a powerful state which was gradually acquiring more and more territory. In this struggle it was the English East-India Company which proved victorious. By the early 18th century it controlled Madras, Bombay and Calcutta and in 1757

took the whole of Bengal, whence it began the gradual conquest of the whole of India.

Social and economic development under the Moghul Empire. The Moghul period in India saw the zenith of feudalism. The rural commune finally turned into a tax-paying feudal commune and the position of its members to a certain extent was evened out. The majority of peasants had their own holdings, but land tilling now became their duty. The peasants had to pay so much for their allotments that they were often forced to rent land from another commune as *payakaris*, or aliens. The steady rise in taxation under the Moghuls increasingly worsened the position of the peasants. As the empire went into decline famines became a frequent occurrence and the villages were left deserted, a phenomenon that was often mentioned by the chroniclers.

The *jagir* began to replace the *ikta* as land granted for feudal service. It differed from the latter first of all in size—*jagirs* frequently ran into several thousand hectares. Furthermore, it was not linked with the administration of a province and every *jagirdar* was obliged to maintain a fixed number of troops, mainly cavalry. On the death of the *jagirdar* not only his lands went back to the state, but all his property, since it was considered that the state should first examine his holdings and draw up a final account. Only after this could the heirs be given what they were entitled to, but it was a rare occurrence if they received anything. As the plight of the country got worse in the latter years of the empire the *jagirdars*, who under Akbar had opposed attempts to pay them in money, on the contrary sent petitions to Aurangzeb asking for money rather than land. The subdued *rajahs* who recognized the suzerainty of the Moghul Empire and paid it tribute were known as *zamindars*. The state made no attempt to intervene in the affairs between the *zamindar* and his peasants. The latter paid the former what amounted to a rent rather than a land tax, the size of which and method of collection was fixed by the *zamindar*. The *zamindar's* possessions were officially regarded as hereditary. Since in the second half of the 17th century the *jagirs* also became hereditary and the *jagirdars* increasingly began to collect “illegal” taxes from the peasants, the differences between the *jagirdars* and the *zamindars* became less and less evident.

Another form of private property was the *suylur-*

ghal, also known as the *waqf* or *inam*. This was usually a small area of land given to the sheikh or other priest as an hereditary endowment, which required no other duties from the owner than the holding of religious prayers. These *suyurghals* accounted for 3 per cent of state lands.

Wares from India were famed throughout the world. Around the Indian Ocean and the South Seas they were used instead of money. Indian merchants in the port towns bought up goods, mainly clothes, from the craftsmen and then sold them to the European companies for export. The demand for cloth and the growth of money-commodity relations in a society with predominantly small-scale production inevitably led to the appearance of wholesale merchants who took control of the craftsmen. The basic method for this was the advancement of loans against future production. The power of the merchants over "their own" craftsmen was so great that they sometimes moved workers to different localities at their own discretion.

Coastal shipping and internal trade developed with caravan routes criss-crossing the country. Promissory notes from the rich merchants circulated on a par with money. These merchants frequently loaned to feudal rulers and enjoyed enormous influence, but of course those same rulers could have the merchant thrown into prison and force more money out of him. The income from foreign trade, which was converted into objects of luxury or treasures, stayed in the hands of the parasitic nobility so that they never became a source of primary accumulation. Although in the late 17th and early 18th centuries a number of larger workshops appeared and rich merchants and wholesalers dominated the craft workers, a capitalist system did not develop in Indian feudal society. A process of merging took place between the upper strata of the merchants and the ruling class. People with money sometimes kept small armies and became *jagirdars*, while the *jagirdars* in their turn owned trading ships, shops and caravanserais and took part in trade. The most valuable goods produced in the country were at times placed under government monopoly and their buying and selling required special permission.

The culture of the Moghul Empire. Moghul culture, particularly during the time of Akbar, was dominated by the synthesis of Muslim and Indian ideas. The buildings of Fathpur Sikri, for example,

clearly show Indian elements—flat roofs, decorative details in the form of interwoven flower garlands and representations of animals, gryphons, etc. The court poetry which was written in the Persian-derived languages contains feelings of religious tolerance, and a number of poets wrote on themes that were taken straight from the Indian epics. Akbar's historiographer, Abul Fazl, provides in the *Akbar Namah* (Book of Akbar) under a chapter headed "Account of the Twelve Subahs (provinces)" information on the customs of the Indian population as well as their holy places and monuments. Court poetry was written in the official language which was not the colloquial language of the people. This in the Moghul Empire was Tajik-Persian and in the Deccan sultanates Urdu. The lyrical poetry of Faidi and Urfi who lived during the reign of Akbar was very popular as were the poems of Bedil (1664-1721) which castigated the despots who oppressed the people and whose verses were imbued, with feelings of deep sorrow. When Tajik-Persian died out as the official language, Bedil was almost forgotten in his native country, but his verses found a second homeland among the Tajiks of Central Asia. The Deccan poet, Ghawasi (16th century), who wrote in Urdu, was known in Hindustan but not in the Deccan. The *Bhakti* poets mainly wrote in their local languages. Most prominent among them in the 16th century were: Tulsi Das (1532-1623), whose poem, *Ramayana*, written in various dialects of Hindi was sung at Hindu festivals and was widely known among the people; Sur Das, who lived in Rajasthan; the *Rajput* poetess, Mira Bai; Ekanath from Maharashtra; Shankaradeva from Assam; and the Sikh *Gurus* whose hymns are collected together in the holy book of the Sikhs, *Adi Granth*. Also well known was the *Chandimangal*, a poem by the Bengal poet, Chokroborti Mukunda Rama on the blessings bestowed by the goddess, Chandi. This was a realistic story about life in Bengal at the time in which elements of fantasy and folklore are interwoven. In the 17th century the *Bhakti* philosophy was developed in the poetry of the Marathi and the Sikhs, but they contained appeals to active struggle.

The Moghul period saw the zenith of the art of the annalist. The chroniclers wrote their works in a good literary Persian with considerable attention to historical detail. They provided a multitude of sources and frequently included historical documents in

their narrative, or gave a precis of them. There were many such chronicles beginning with the *Babur Namah* written by Babur himself and ending with the *Dictionary of Emirs* written by Shah Namaz Khan which was written in the Deccan in the mid-18th century.

The zenith of architecture came with the wealth and luxury of the buildings that were erected during the reign of Shah Jahan. Whereas under Akbar dark-red sandstone had been used for facing the buildings in Fathpur Sikri, under Shah Jahan the finest white marble encrusted with semi-precious and at times precious stones became the main material for decoration, particularly at Agra and Delhi. Aurangzeb used the same materials for the building of the Moth-Ki-Masjid (Pearl mosque) in Delhi, but later buildings became much simpler. Thus the mausoleum of Aurangzeb's favourite wife at Aurangzebabad is a copy of the Taj Mahal, but does not have the elegant proportions of the original at Agra and, furthermore, it is faced mostly with light sandstone and is plastered with *chanam*, a plaster made from crushed shells. The 18th century saw a decline in the architecture of the Moghul provinces, but beautiful and original buildings were erected in the *Rajput* fortress towns of Gwalior, Alwar and Jaipur. They were built on hills or by lakes, some of which were specially constructed.

In painting the miniature was the predominant genre. The *Rajput* miniature was developed in the 16th century under the influence of *Rajput* wall paintings, but it also continued the traditions of the Jaini miniature. At court there emerged a Moghul style of miniature painting in the traditions of Persian miniatures where the style had first been developed, but the Moghul paintings were more realistic and less mannered than the Persian. Both Moghul and *Rajput* miniatures can be seen to have influenced each other. The colours used were natural and mainly made from minerals which have not faded to this day. In the Deccan miniatures of the same style as in Agra developed, but unlike the Moghul they were excessively detailed. During the 18th century the former painting styles declined, but in the lesser *Rajput* principalities new schools of miniature painting developed, which were known as *Pahari* (mountain painting). The artists in Moghul India came both from Persia and India itself.

During the medieval period popular festivals of music and dancing were held which drew their themes from Indian mythology, mainly Vishnuism. These festivals were often interspersed with farcical scenes from daily life in which the Moghul oppressors were held up to ridicule. At times they were also held in the feudal palaces. But there the popular art lost its spontaneity and became mannered.

Chapter IX

China in the Middle Ages

From antiquity to the Middle Ages. At the end of the 2nd century, A. D., the Han dynasty in China entered a period of acute crisis (at the same time as the Roman Empire). After four hundred years of unity and might the Han Empire broke up in the 3rd century into three states: Wei, Shu and Wu. This period is usually referred to as the Three Kingdoms. Thus the ancient world, which stretched in a thin line of civilization along the south of Eurasia from the Atlantic to the Pacific, began to break up at the same time from both ends—the East and the West.

Of the two factors which eroded the belt of the ancient civilized world—barbarian invasions from without and uprisings from within—China unlike Rome was first affected by the latter. The vast Yellow Headdress Uprising of 184 A. D. tolled the death knell for the East Han State. The central government could not put down the insurrectionists and had to rely on the commanders of the local troops who had during the years of internal strife almost complete autonomy. One of the commanders who put down the uprising, Tung Chou, sacked and burned the city of Loyang, which for several centuries had been the capital. Another, Tsao Tsao, put one of the powerless members of the East Han dynasty on the throne in 196 and made him into his puppet. In 220 Tsao Pei proclaimed himself emperor and the once glorious Han dynasty ceased to exist. Tsao Pei took for his dynasty the name of Wei, which in pre-Han times had been the name of one of the principalities in Northern China.

The Tsao Tsao family took control of the larger

part of the Hwang Ho basin, the “historical part” of China and the cradle of the Han nation, which had been the base for the ancient Chinese state. But the Wei dynasty was not able to extend its power to the lands south of the Yangtze River and the territory of what is now Szechwan, an area which became part of China comparatively late and at the time was only just beginning to have Han settlers. These came mainly from the many peasants who fled to the warmer, humid and fertile regions of the south and south-west to escape the power of the big landowners and the internecine wars. Here two states were formed by Tsao Tsao’s two rivals—the military commander, Sun Tsuan, who called his state with its capital at present-day Nanking by the name of Wu; and an impoverished descendant of the Han dynasty, Liu Pei, who formed the state of Shu in what is now the province of Szechwan. The best known personage in Shu was the legendary general and statesman, Chu-ko Liang.

In 208 a famous battle took place on the Yangtze in which Tsao Tsao’s fleet was defeated by the united fleets of Wu and Shu commanded by Chu-ko Liang. This battle was the beginning of the division between Northern and Central-Southern China, which played an important role throughout the history of this country during the Middle Ages. Tsao Tsao was unable to conquer the southern territories. The coexistence of the three kingdoms of Wei, Shu and Wu in place of the old Han Empire forms the content of Chinese history throughout the larger part of the 3rd century.

In 265 the Tsao Tsao family was replaced by the

Sima family, which for a long time had loyally served the rulers but gradually taken state power into their own hands. The founder of the new state known as Western Jin, Sima Yan, annexed Shu in 263 and Wu in 280 bringing once again all the lands of the Han Empire within the same boundaries.

Under Tsao Tsao the search had begun for the kind of social and economic reforms as would promote the revival of the country. The lands that had been devastated by war were once more settled, military posts were set up and the colonists were given collective holdings by the state in return for military service. These military settlements helped agricultural production to rise and strengthened the state.

Chinese popular tradition sees Tsao Tsao as a cunning, treacherous despot, whose aim in life was to resurrect the hated empire. The vast epic, the *Three Kingdoms* which has been handed down by story-tellers and actors in the folk theatres from century to century, glorifies Tsao Tsao's opponents who founded the states in the south—Liu Pei and Chu-ko Liang—who are presented as having had lofty aims and chivalrous characters.

Guan Yu was later even deified: he was declared to be Guan Di, the god of war, and worshipped in temples built for him. Although these leaders virtually played into the hands of feudal separatism, the people remembered the main thing—Liu Pei and his friends threw down a challenge to the despot, Tsao Tsao. At performances of the traditional Chinese theatre Tsao Tsao always has a white mask signifying a sly and crafty villain.

Tsao Tsao, an historical personage who stands on the border between the ancient and medieval periods in Chinese history, nevertheless belongs more to antiquity. He tried to save the empire, which was doomed to destruction, and was not overparticular about the methods he used—oppression and coercion being the most predominant. The military settlements that resembled communal holdings and served as the bulwark for the centralized government, were economically closer to those of the slave owners than those of the feudal lords. They acted only as a temporary measure serving the requirements of war. Subsequently when China was reunited and the immediate need for them lessened, the government of Western Jin disbanded them.

The first thing the revived state needed was to

secure and regulate the main source of its revenue—requisitions in kind from the peasant lands, but these depended on the structure of the free-peasant class. In 280 Sima Yan published a land law which stipulated state ownership of the land, but provided for plots to be given to the direct producers according to a fixed norm. After the death of the holder the plot was returned to the state. Civil servants were also given plots of land, and these were much larger. But this land law did not affect the large estates that already belonged to the nobility—its only concern was to stop the ruination and disappearance of the free peasantry. However there is evidence to suggest that this law was not strictly observed. Large private land holdings, particularly in the newly-settled parts of the Yangtze basin, continued to increase. As a result, the economic braces of the empire remained unstable and the unification which produced the State of Western Jin was only temporary.

China and barbarians. The Middle Ages in China began almost a century and a half earlier than they did in Rome. In the vast expanses of the Eurasian steppes a great movement was beginning. Here in the east, in what is now Mongolia, a mighty coalition of nomadic tribes led by the Hunnu and their chief, Liu Yuan, was forming. There is still no precise information on the ethnic groups that had allied themselves with Liu Yuan. It may be supposed that the alliance included Turks, Mongols, Tungus-Manchurians, and Tibetans (or proto-Turks, proto-Mongolians, proto-Manchurians and proto-Tibetans). In 311, i. e. two years before Constantine and Licinius passed an edict in far-off Milan allowing the worship of Christianity, Liu Yuan's son took Loyang and thereby put an end to the short-lived Western Jin Empire. The Jin dynasty fled and from that time on the Chinese Empire is referred to by historians as Eastern Jin.

Northern China was long the scene of nomadic struggle, the barbarian tribes being referred to by the Chinese historians as Hunnu, Hsianpis or Chiangs, etc. Ultimately the Hsianpis proved victorious and defeated the Hunnu—evidently the same Hunnu who later moved westwards and spent some decades crossing the territory of what is now Kazakhstan and Kalmykia to enter the Black Sea steppes and fall upon the Goths who had recently formed a state in that region. This in turn caused

the Goths and all the other Germanic tribes to move westwards against Rome in 375. Thus began the great migration of people which was the first event in the history of mankind to embrace in a comparatively short period the civilizations of the Far East and the Mediterranean. The whole of the known world now moved into the Middle Ages.

The nomads who had taken Northern China could not subdue the regions which lay along the River Yangtze. The state which lay to the south with its capital at Nanking was left untouched. Here a continual struggle for power had been going on between the different factions among the wealthy landowners and this had produced political instability and a frequent change of ruling dynasties. Nevertheless, in these difficult times when Northern China was being subdued by the nomadic tribes, it was the south which acted as the guardian of Han traditions and culture. It was here, too, that the populations of the devastated north fled. In 383 an enormous army of "barbarians" from the north consisting of Chiangs, Hsianpis and Hunnu advanced on Southern China, but on crossing the River Feishui (a tributary of the Hwang Ho) they were met and completely defeated by the numerically smaller forces of the South Chinese state of Eastern Jin. After the Battle of Red Cliff this was the second historical engagement that ensured the long and independent existence of Southern China.

The northern and southern dynasties. The period which lasted from 311 to 589 (the year of the reunification) when Southern and Northern China were separated is known to Chinese historians as the Nan Pei Chiao, the "Time of the Northern and Southern Dynasties".

One of the Hsianpi tribes which has taken over Northern China and which was known in the Chinese sources as "Toba" had established itself in the region known today as Shansi and formed its capital at Datung. By 440 this tribe had subjugated the whole of Northern China and called its state Wei, claiming as it were to continue the centralizing traditions of Tsao Tsao. The conquerors gradually merged with the conquered, and as these formerly nomadic peoples adapted to a settled existence they adopted Han culture. In the early 5th century the Toba rebuilt Loyang and made it their capital, where strongly fortified it would serve as the residence for the nobility among what were yesterday's

nomads—the Toba, the Juchens and the Turks.

Under Emperor Hsiao Weng (471-499) assimilation between the Toba and the Chinese went ahead rapidly. The early class society of the Toba which was gradually becoming feudalized needed the greater experience than the Chinese had in legislation. The land law of Northern Wei (485) was generally based on the same principles as the corresponding law had been in Western Jin, i. e. in respect of the allotment system, state control over land tenure and the guarantee that the state would receive its taxes by preserving the free peasants as a class of tax-payers. Since there remained many vestiges of the communal system among the Toba, the government could make use of them to take measures that would support the unity of the aristocracy and prevent its rapid disintegration through the growth of large-scale private property. The laws of Northern Wei were evidently more effective than those of Western Jin.

But in vain the government tried to prevent the nobility from hoarding gold, silver and silk. The accumulation of property by the private owners continued and land that theoretically belonged to the state was in practice sold and bought. It appears likely that there were two trends among the aristocracy contending with each other—one which advocated individual property and Chinese culture; the other which stood for strict maintenance of the vestiges of the commune which had cemented together the early class state. This latter more or less stood for the purity of the Toba from alien Han influences. As a result of the conflict between these factions the Eastern Wei dynasty was overthrown in 550 to be replaced by the Ch'i and later, in 580, the Chou. Here a strengthening of "national" reaction among the Toba is clearly to be felt.

The curbing of private property and spending on luxuries and the strengthening of the civil service bureaucracy built up the central government and the army. But this was no longer sufficient to restore the domination of the Toba over the Hans. Assimilation by this time had gone so far that by the end of the 6th century the last differences between the Toba and the Hans disappeared. The reinforcing within the state of Chou of certain Toba traditions only meant the strengthening of that stratum of the ruling clan that had itself descended mainly from the "barbarians" and that was relatively united by

the vestiges of its commune life being less affected by the disintegrating influence of private property and therefore serving as the main bulwark of the centralizing tendencies. It was this social stratum, the northern military nobility, which provided the basis for the reunification of China in the 6th century. By that time Northern China was once more heavily populated, while the southern provinces despite increased colonization were in no way comparable. In Northern China itself the demographic centre moved from the north-west where it had been in antiquity to the north-east. Meanwhile developing contacts with the outside world turned the attention of the Chinese rulers towards the west and north-west. And there at the end of the Great Silk Route lay a new world. There too lay China's most powerful neighbour during the early medieval period—the powerful nomadic state of the Turks.

The reunification of China. The reunification of China in the 6th century passed through a number of stages. To begin with a Chou commander, Yang Chien, took the region which is now the province of Szechwan from the Southern Chinese state of Chen. After his successful campaigns against Chen, Yang Chien declared himself emperor of the former State of Chou in 581 and thereby began the dynasty of the Sui. In 583 Yang chose as his capital one of the two traditional capitals of ancient China, Chanan, which lay in the west of the country conveniently placed for conducting affairs with its main partner, the Turkish Khanate. Yang Chien concluded a truce with the Turkish khan which freed his hands to unite Northern and Southern China.

In 588 having warned the ruler of the southern state of Chen of his intention to invade and having sent the people of the south an appeal to revive China as a single country, Yang Chien invaded Chen and took it easily. Thus 589 became the year of the reunification of China which had been divided for almost 400 years.

But hardly had Yang Chien restored unity to the country and got the allotment system functioning, when he renewed the aggressive policy of the old Han Empire.

The international situation in the 6th and 7th centuries differed sharply from that which existed at the time of the Han dynasty expansion. Then the Han Empire had been the only outpost of civilization in East Asia. Now on the borders of China a

number of states existed: in the north-east there was the state of Bohai peopled by Tungus-Manchurians, which lasted from the 7th to the 10th century; on the Korean peninsula there was Kogure, Pakche and Silla; on the Indochina peninsula there was Vietnam and the Angkor Empire. China had continual connections with India and Ceylon, chiefly due to the Buddhist pilgrims.

But along the greater part of its border, in the north and in the west, China's neighbours as before were the nomadic tribes. But the ethnic origins of these have been clearly established thanks to an inscription discovered by the Russian scholar, Nikolai Yadrintsev, in 1889. This had been compiled by the rulers of the nomadic tribes, the khans (Turk. *ka-gans*), who lived along the River Orkhon in what is today Mongolia where they had their capital. The inscription was deciphered by a Danish and a Russian scholar, Vilhelm Thomsen and Vassily Radlov, and turned out to be Turkic. The Turks like the Arabs and the Slavs were among the peoples who entered the arena of world history in the 6th and 7th centuries. At the same time as the vanguard of the Turkic migration—the Bulgars and the Avars—were advancing on Europe and together with the Slavs threatening Byzantium, the Orkhon Turks in Asia were rivalling China in a struggle for hegemony.

The new religion, Buddhism, which spread throughout China in the early centuries A. D., preaching non-violence, never turned China into a pacifist state despite the fact that it was the dominant religion. Between 604 and 608 forces of the Sui government subjugated a number of Turkic tribes that had at one time been overrun by China, but later won back their independence. In the south, Chinese armies moved across North Vietnam and reached the Hindu State of Champa, which then exported to China spices, valuable woods and exotic feathers which were very popular among the Chinese women. In 608 the Chinese conquered the West Turkic Khanate. From everywhere envoys came to Chanan bearing gifts, which the Sui court interpreted as a form of subservience. In fact, however, they were representatives of independent states who had learned of the renaissance of China's power and had come to ask either for help, favours or neutrality from this new power, or at least establish trade relations with it.

Apart from military conquests, Yang Chien's son and heir, Yang Guang, carried out an extensive building programme. The former capital of Loyang was rebuilt. A new, third capital, Yangchow, was built on the Yangtze to strengthen the power of the emperor in the southern lands. With the same intention of holding the south more firmly a huge Imperial Canal was built stretching almost from the northern borders to Yangchow, which was completed in 610. The wars and these grandiose buildings and constructions demanded enormous finances, which were collected from the population in the form of taxes and the forced labour of masses of peasants who were driven to work off their labour obligations (the construction of the Imperial Canal took the labour of some 1 million peasants).

The forces of the empire were excessively strained and the discontent of the oppressed masses grew. As had already happened in China during the first unification by the Chin dynasty (in the 3rd century B. C.) the unifiers overestimated their success and their strength and could not immediately set "reasonable" limits to exploitation which the masses would be ready to accept. Therefore the first unifying dynasty did not last long and only its heir (after the Chin it had been the Han dynasty, and after the Sui dynasty came the Tang) could fully complete the task of unification and maintain the unity of the country for a long period.

The turning point in the fate of the Sui Empire came with the attempt of Yang Guang to conquer Korea. His expeditions there in 612, 613 and 614 were all failures. To pay for these campaigns additional taxes were imposed (in 610 and 613). In 615 the Turks revolted against China, and they were followed by the Chinese peasants, who driven to extremes through the excessive taxes and obligation to provide free labour, also broke out in revolt. In 616 Yang Guang was forced to make a hasty flight to his new capital of Yangchow and there he died suddenly. The internecine conflict that followed brought to the forefront a commander from the Shansi province (traditionally a stronghold of the Toba) by the name of Li Yuan. With the help of his son, Li Shihmin, he defeated his rivals, put down the revolts and in 618 established his own dynasty, the Tang.

The Tang state generally speaking continued the policies of the Sui, but learning from the lessons of

the previous government it tried not to carry things too far and so exhaust the patience of the exploited population. Chanan remained the capital. After his death Li Yuan was given the title Gao-tsu ("Great Forefather"). His reign was short since one of his sons, Li Shihmin, killed all his brothers (including the eldest which, according to Confucian morality, was the most heinous of crimes) and finally sat on the throne himself, at first with his father and then after the latter's death as a ruler in his own right from 626 to 649. He was given the posthumous title of Tai-tsung ("Great Ancestor"). Confucianism forgave Li Shihmin his crime, since his reign was the highest point in the flourishing of the Chinese Empire under the Tangs. Chinese historiography portrays Li Shihmin as the greatest and wisest of all the Chinese emperors.

Within the country the allotment system continued to go from strength to strength and during this period reached its greatest development. In foreign affairs Li Shihmin crushed his most dangerous enemy, the Turkic Khanate, in 630, and went on to open up a route to Central Asia for the Chinese army. China only risked renewing its active policy in Korea under Li Shihmin's successor, known in history by the name Gao-tsung ("Eminent Ancestor, 650-683). China supported the South Korean state of Silla against the North Korean states of Pakche and Kogure. Ultimately Silla defeated the other two states and united the whole Korean peninsula into a single state that was friendly to China, but quite independent of it.

Other neighbours of China that had previously lagged behind in development also formed their own states. The Tibetans formed an empire in the early 7th century to include also Nepal, the south of what is today Sinkiang, and the northern regions of India. In 614 the Tibetan king married a Chinese princess thereby forming an alliance with China. Chinese Buddhist monks and craftsmen started to travel to Tibet.

In 651 the state of Nanchao was formed by the Niehan peoples in the place where today lies the Chinese province of Yunnan. It remained independent until the 13th century when the Mongols invaded.

In 679 Vietnam recognized Chinese protectorate. During the same period Tang China exercised a powerful cultural influence over Japan.

China

As a result of reunification, China became a world power, whose influence was felt in the far-off western countries. The appearance of a newly reunified China coincided in time with the arrival of another enormous power, the Arab Caliphate, for it was during the 7th and 8th centuries that the Arabs conquered a vast amount of territory from Spain in the west to Iran and Central Asia in the east. In fact it was here in Central Asia that the Arabs expanding eastwards and the Chinese expanding westwards came into contact.

Their first diplomatic contacts came in 651, when the Arabs were preparing to invade Iran. China was Iran's neighbour and naturally she was approached both by the Arab caliph, Osman, who sent an embassy to Chanan, and by the penultimate Iranian shah, Jezdegerd III of the Sassanide dynasty, who asked China for military aid. But China could provide no real aid. The next embassy that was sent by Jezdegerd III's successor, Piruz, in 654 received the only gesture of support the Chinese could make—they granted the Iranian prince the nominal title of governor of the province of Tsilia (now Afghanistan), which was virtually independent of China. Iran was conquered by the Arabs and in 675 Piruz fled to China, where he died in 708.

The subsequent eastward movement of the Arabs even resulted in 713 in them taking for a short time Kashgar, which lay in the territory of what is today Chinese Turkestan (Sinkiang) and which was then the centre of a virtually independent principality. More than three decades later Chinese forces again clashed with the Arabs while fighting against the Tibetan Empire. The Tang army led by Gao Sian-chung crossed the Pamir and Gindukush Mountains. In 751 in the basin of the River Talas (Fergana Valley) a famous battle took place between the Chinese and the Arabs, which the latter won making them masters of Central Asia. The westward expansion of China had been halted.

Meanwhile within the empire the seeds of disintegration had been sown and were quietly growing. Centralization and the allotment system were still in existence, but the big landowners, whose property legally belonged to the state, were making increasing efforts to have themselves recognized as the full and legal owners of their estates. An indirect reflection of these undercurrents in Chinese economic

and social life can be seen in the internal struggle that was waged within the ruling Tang dynasty.

The internal struggle in the Tang Empire.

Since the power of the ruling house of Li (a descendant of Li Yuan and Li Shihmin) rested on the system of land allotments which served as the basis of centralization, any opposition objectively became a focal point for the growing forces of private ownership and local power. From the mid-7th century two types of conflict appear: (1) between the southern and northern nobilities; (2) between the ruling house of Li and the other noble houses. In relation to the former case the south was more concerned about private forms of landownership, while the north had an ever growing military and administrative nobility with increasing independence in the provinces. In the second instance the opponents of the ruling house of Li usually acted through the houses of one or other of the emperor's wives which had been temporarily raised in importance.

Thus the state could be weakened either by the non-noble landowners gaining power, or by the separatist movement among the military nobility of the north or by relatives of the empress's overthrowing the house of Li. And both the private landowners whose numbers were continually growing and the provincial nobility whose political power was gradually maturing were both being crushed by the central government and trying to get away from the allotment system which constrained them.

During some hundred years that followed the seemingly complete victory of the allotment system (when centralization was at its height in China) three women—Wu Tse-tian, Wei and Yang Guifei—who were all wives of the emperor, played a prominent (in the words of the Confucian historiography a "fateful") role in the history of the Tang state.

The career of Wu Tse-tian, the daughter of a merchant who found herself in the harem of Li Shihmin and after that of his son, Gao-Tsung, is an example of how much success a Chinese woman could achieve in politics, despite the inferior position in which she lived. Having first deposed her emperor husband in 683 and done the same to his sons in the following year, she held what amounted to supreme power. In 690 she officially declared herself "Celestial Ruler" having deposed the Tang dynasty and founded her own Chou dynasty. In 710

Empress Wei, wife of the then reigning emperor, made a bid for power. But this was prevented by Prince Li Lung-tsi, who himself became emperor in 712 and who is best known in history by the name Hsüan Tsung.

The long reign of Hsüan Tsung—712-756—was the last period in the zenith of the Tang Empire. The emperor loved art and patronized poets and artists. During the first half of his reign it was the southern nobility which predominated at court with the prime-minister coming from Guangchow in the extreme south. But the second half of his reign was marked by a certain amount of opposition to the southern influence since the new prime-minister who took up office in 736 tended to advance opponents of the cultured elite.

It was during this period that the third of the previously mentioned women, the beautiful Yang Gui-fei became the favourite concubine of the emperor and began to have an important influence in the affairs of state. In 752 she succeeded in getting her cousin appointed as prime-minister, a move which provoked the indignation of the northern nobility and was one of the reasons for the clash between noble factions that began the break up of the Tang Empire. In late 755 An Lu-shan, the governor of what is now the Peking region and of Turkic origins, raised a rebellion. Three border districts were under his control and he had command of more than 150,000 soldiers. He took Kaifeng, Loyang and in the summer of 756, Chanan. The Emperor Hsüan Tsung fled to the province of Szechwan. On the road the troops that were accompanying him rebelled and demanded Yang Gui-fei to be handed over since they considered her the cause of all their troubles. This he did and she was put to death on the spot.

While the imperial court remained in Szechwan, detachments of Uigurs and other neighbouring peoples, who had been brought in by the imperial government to put down the revolt, took Chanan and Loyang. The mutinous feudal lords quarrelled amongst themselves and An Lu-shan was killed. The imperial court returned from Szechwan to the capital and by 763 the feudal revolts had been put down. But by now the prestige and real power of the central government had been considerably reduced. The provincial rulers got stronger with many of their offices becoming virtually hereditary. After the mutiny of An Lu-shan the Tang Empire entered a period of decline.

The economic basis of the Tang Empire. The centralized empire at its zenith had as its economic base what was called the allotment system—*chun tian*. The point of this system was that while the titled nobility and the monasteries had private estates of land, the civil servants and the peasants were given allotments which they could use, but which belonged to the state. The peasant was registered on his land and the dividing line between the free peasant and the former slave who had been put on the land was gradually eroded. Thus arose a single class of dependent peasants and a major step had been made in the direction of feudalizing Chinese society. From the commune hierarchy there came a broad stratum of petty feudal lords who supplemented the ruling class.

The previously free peasants whose allotments virtually became the property of the big landowners fell into dependence on their new masters. The single harvest tax for landowners that was introduced in 780 signified recognition on the part of the state that the allotment system had collapsed and feudal private ownership of the land proved victorious.

Culture in the 3rd-9th Centuries

The spread of Buddhism in China. The cultural life of China in the early medieval period was profoundly influenced by the arrival of Buddhism in the country. Throughout all the previous history of Chinese civilization there is no other example of such a powerful ideological influence from without. This was due to the similarity in social development

between China and India which engendered similar ideological requirements. Buddhism, the first of the world's great religions, developed originally in India, and somewhat earlier than a similar religion could arise in China from transformed Confucianism and Taoism, it was penetrating into China.

During the 3rd and 4th centuries Buddhism

spread over China. Thousands of Indian preachers came to the country to be welcomed on their way by the Chinese pilgrims going to India. On the route from India to China via Central Asia the monastery of Tunhuang was built in the north-west of China. This was an important stopping place and the valuable Buddhist manuscripts and frescoes which it contained have still been preserved to the present day. From these frescoes it is clear how the pure Indian style was gradually replaced over the centuries by the Chinese as the Buddhist Church in China became more and more Sinicized, while in India, its native land, it on the contrary began to decline.

As the single centralized empire grew stronger, so also did Confucianism as being better adapted to suit the needs of the bureaucratic system. It was that time also that saw the appearance of a number of philosophical works criticizing Buddhism either from a materialist standpoint (Fan Chen, 5th-6th century) or an orthodox Confucian position, albeit mixed with Buddhist and Taoist elements (Han Yui, 9th century).

Chinese poetry in the early Middle Ages. Of all the various art forms it was poetry that was the most developed in early medieval China. Evidently it was a poetic understanding of the world that was closer to people of those times, times when the foundations of a life that had existed for centuries were being undermined, the very basis of a Sino-centrist view of the world was being shaken, when states were rising only to fall and be replaced by others, and when the embryonic knowledge and critical thought that had been developed over the ages were being ousted by blind faith. The greatest Chinese poets appeared during the early Middle Ages when the centralizing tendencies were supreme and a period of peace aided intensive creative thought.

The first such period came with the earliest of the medieval states, the Wei Empire.

Tsao Tsao, the cruel and cunning despot, was at the same time a major poet and one of the creators of the new poetic genre which was based on folk songs. It was said that he composed his verses in the saddle. His poems praise the valour of warriors, describe the hardships of campaign life and portray the scenes of destruction and devastation after the internecine wars.

His son, Tsao Pei, the first emperor of the Wei

dynasty, invited poets to his court and composed impromptu verses. His verses are elegant in style and contrast the transitoriness of life with the pleasures of natural beauty, wine and poetry. Tsao Pei was a great lover of literature. But for all his artistic taste he still remained first and foremost an emperor, and in his understanding literature was intended to serve the needs of state administration.

His brother, Tsao Chi, on the contrary, was primarily a poet. In vain his father, Tsao Tsao, gave him military and administrative posts and even hoped to make him his heir in violation of the rule of seniority (he was the fourth son). But Tsao Chi could never please his father and he was edged out by his wily brother, Tsao Pei. After the death of his father Tsao Chi as a potential rival for the throne was continually under suspicion and was always being moved from one post to another and from one place to another. In his verses Tsao Chi calls himself a rolling-stone. Sometimes he was even forbidden to have contact with his relatives and members of his family.

With bitterness he compared the attitude of the emperor towards him with the indifference of dry bean sprouts burning under a pot to the fact that their "brother beans" are boiling on the fire.

Tsao Chi's views were formed under the influence of both Confucianism and Taoism. From the former he took his loyalty to the monarchy and his desire to serve the state; from the latter he was inspired with dreams of immortality and the fantastic images of celestial beings. His verses depict China torn apart by war; the glowering empty city of Loyang with the emperor's palace that had been nothing but ashes for twenty years; and all around grief and despair. The poet believed that the needs of the country ought to come first and that the noble youth should not spend their energies on games, horse riding and drinking. Tsao Chi dreamed of great heroes, bold men who were ready at any time to give their lives for their country, and his gaze was continually being turned towards the borders where China was being threatened by her enemies, the Hunnu and the Hsianpis.

Tsao Chi's verses also praise the eternal human qualities of friendship and talent. The disgraced poet often expressed thoughts that were later developed by the poets of the Tang period on the desirability of easing the lot of the poor in society. The more he

wrote the more motifs of sadness, tiredness and hopelessness occurred in his verses.

During his wild flights through the clouds the poet claimed he saw the golden hall of the ruler of the heavens and looked down on fairy-tale countries. But though he puts himself into such fantastic situations, essentially he still remains an ordinary man: his heart is at home and all his thoughts and concerns are with his native country, and with a sad smile he confesses that though he has searched he has never been able to find the elixir of life.

One of the founding fathers of Chinese medieval poetry was Tao Yuan-ming. He lived in the late 4th and early 5th centuries, when the fall of ancient China had long been a fact of life and when people were tired of pointless wars, of foreign invasions and revolts and were disillusioned about many of the things they had once held dear. Coming from the family of a civil servant he tried to serve in the bureaucracy and for a short time was the head of a district, but he gave up his post as he was unwilling to humiliate himself before an inspector who had been sent to examine his district. Setting down in the hilly region of Lushan in the Yangtze Valley, he took up farming and found consolation in the contemplation of nature, in wine and in writing verses. Though his verses were not simple they, like those of other ancient poets, contain hints and references to historical examples, whose meaning was quite clear to the Chinese reader both in respect of sense and feeling.

Tao Yuan-ming's contemporaries were astonished at his strange way of life and for a long time were unable to appreciate his "rustic" style of writing, but poets of the next generation were attracted by his work, particularly his desire for clarity and simplicity and his praising of a natural, guileless rural life. Literature now began to reflect the change of interest from the town to the countryside which took place in Chinese society from the 3rd to the 5th century. While still in service Tao Yuan-ming dreamed of the time when he would hang up his bureaucrat's clothes and go and plough the fields. Tao was not, of course, a fighter: his social protest was purely passive, but still it was a protest. He even wrote an essay on a social utopia. His poem *Peach Source* which embodies the eternal peasant dream of happiness, based on labour, equality and the patriarchal system had influence in China right

up until the 20th century. The fact that Tao Yuan-ming in passing debunks "scholarly wisdom" shows once more the unorthodoxy of his Confucian beliefs (in other works, however, he regards science and learning with respect).

But the mysticism of the Buddhists and the Taoists and belief in a life after death are completely alien to him. Human life for him is a chain of transformations ending with the natural act of the body merging with the soil. The material principle which springs from the healthy popular character of his poetry is felt very strongly in all Tao's verses.

The three poets who lived in the Tang Empire—Li Po, Du Fu and Po Chü-i—are traditionally recognized as the greatest of the Chinese poets. They all continued in the traditions of Tao Yuan-ming, their verses being simple and clear.

Amidst the contemplation of nature and philosophical thoughts about the relativity of being there suddenly occurs in the works of Li Po the childish mischievous wish to "ride a dragon in the clouds" or to "throw a long lasso across the azure sky and catch the white sun as it swoops down to set". Li Po is a subtle lyricist, conveying either the mood of a man looking at the mountains ("I look at the mountains and the mountains look at me, and we both look long, never tiring of each other"), or the mood of another looking at the moonlight by night.

Du Fu, a contemporary of Li Po, who died eight years later in the early 750s, criticized the imperial policy of expansion, which led to continuous wars that were burdensome for the people and incomprehensible to himself. Du Fu who had himself known hunger and cold, believed it his duty to defend the poor. He dreamed of their happiness.

Du Fu's verses were called by Chinese writers "poetical history" because of the attention their author pays to social problems. It was these same social problems too that were treated even more forcefully in the works of the next generation of poets.

Po Chü-i's forefathers were civil servants and writers and he followed in the same direction. Service to the state and the writing of literature he looked upon as a means to reform society, which in the late 8th-early 9th centuries was undergoing a deep crisis. Po was serving as aide to the governor of the capital province of Shansi (which in ancient times was called Chin), when he wrote his famous poem

Song of Eternal Sorrow about the love of the Emperor Hsüan Tsung for the beautiful Yan Gui-fei. This poem is remarkable for two reasons: it is based on a historical subject (although historical facts are mixed up with legend) and its theme is love, which was usually not of primary importance in Chinese poetry (although in this case it was the love of an emperor). In his subsequent verses, part of which are contained in collections entitled *New Popular Songs* and *Melodies from Chin* the dominant theme is sympathy for the peasant and social protest. The poet tried to write extremely simply. The story goes that every time he composed verses he read them to a simple old woman and if she said she didn't understand them, he would rewrite them. These verses annoyed the aesthetes and they even demanded banning them. Others mockingly suggested that verses that were comprehensible to a simple old woman would not be comprehensible to an educated man. But in fact, when in 815 the poet was sent to Kiangsi province as a civil servant, he wrote that on the journey "the singers pointed me out to one another, saying that that was the man who wrote the *Melodies of Chin* and the *Song of Eternal Sorrow*. From Chanan to Kiangsi—a distance of three to four thousand *li* (one *li* is approximately 0.5 km.—*Ed.*)—in the village schools, the Buddhist temples, the taverns and on the boats I saw my verses written. I heard them sung by the nobles and the common people, by monks, by widows and maidens." Po Chü-i was the voice of the people and this was the voice of protest. The poet was ashamed to live well on the labour of those, whose feet were burned on the hot days of harvest by the scorching earth while the sun blazed down on their backs, and the fruits of whose toil were taken from them to pay taxes to the state. Po Chü-i was indignant at the merciless taxes in money that were levied on the peasant, when there was nowhere even to get a copper coin from. In a poem criticizing the life of idle luxury spent by the court nobility, the poet bitterly adds:

*And yet last summer
There was a drought in Chiang-nan.*

*And in the villages of Chu-Chou
People were eating people.*

Many of the scenes found in Po Chü-i's poetry are undoubtedly taken from the everyday life around him. A peasant who has accidentally wandered into a luxurious flower market sighs bitterly when he sees a bouquet of flowers being bought for a sum equal to the taxes gathered from ten households. An old collier, whose brows are white from age and whose hands are black from soot, carries on an ox a load of coal, the fruit of many days' toil, to sell at the market, but suddenly two haughty riders come galloping up, office-bearers from the court. They turn the ox round, carry off the coal and give nothing in return but a few shreds of silk. The emperor, learning that the peasants in his region are suffering terrible hardships from taxation, pities them and frees them from paying taxes for the year; but his pity comes too late—nine-tenths of the households have already paid their taxes...

Taking an overall view of early medieval Chinese poetry, we should remember that this was its golden age. Developing on the basis of folk songs this poetry expressed with particular simplicity and forcefulness a patriotism that reflected the formation from the 3rd to the 8th century of a single Chinese (Han) nation, while at the same time it was a major factor influencing the formation of this nation.

After Tsao Chi, who stood on the dividing line between the ancient and the medieval periods, the poets more and more insistently began to turn to social themes, sympathizing with the oppressed Chinese peasants who not infrequently had lost their lands and were forced to wander the country. Whereas with Tsao Chi such sympathy rarely went further than a comparison of his own personal lot as a declassé and outcast from his own family with that of the vagrants, Tao Yuan-ming dreamed of social equality, while Du Fu and particularly Po Chü-i condemned the oppression of the peasantry. From the verses of Po Chü-i one feels that the cup of oppression was overflowing, and indeed ten years later the great peasant uprising of Huang Chiao broke out and destroyed the Tang Empire.

Feudal Fragmentation and the Sung Empire

The popular movement. The Huang Chiao Uprising. During the early medieval period (a term which in this book is always to be understood on a world-wide scale) China for all the unique features of its own development—the continued existence of centralized states, although within narrower borders than in ancient times, and a correspondingly higher level of urban development and urban culture than in Europe—passed essentially through the same social and economic stages as the European world (the barbarian invasions of states that had existed from ancient times; the simultaneous acquisition of civilization by vast new areas in the south; and the radical restructuring of landownership with the temporary domination of its conditional forms).

In the transition to the new system of agrarian relations which characterized mature feudalism the mass of the peasantry lost their holdings and crowds of landless vagrants wandered the country. As at the time of the decline of ancient China, the central government became the arena for a bloody conflict between the two court factions, the “scholars” (who more or less tried to take account of the real situation in the provinces) and the eunuchs (whose whole careers were indissolubly tied up with the dissolute central government). As in ancient China feudal discord and popular unrest ended in a war which brought about the collapse of the empire and thus became the dividing line between two historical periods. The end of ancient China had come with the Yellow Headdress Uprising, the end of the early medieval period was brought about by the revolt of Huang Chiao.

The chronological framework for the peasant war in the 9th century is usually considered to be 874-884, but in fact it lasted until 901. The uprising broke out in the North Chinese provinces of what are now Hopei, Honan and Shantung. The insurgents were led by two illicit salt-traders, Wang Hsian-chi (died in 878) and Huang Chiao, but in many respects the uprising was spontaneous. The causes of the discontent which led to the revolt were state and private oppression which had become intolerable. The peasants burned the tax lists and the promissory notes, they ceased paying state taxes and

performing duties and obligations for the individual feudal lords, and they murdered and robbed officials and landowners. Appeals of the insurgents which have been preserved mention the oppression suffered under the laws, the office-bearers and the state. But it was the central government that was the main target for the insurgents. The revolt served to aid the decline that had already begun in the empire and its subsequent fragmentation into separate feudal states.

In late 880 the insurgents took Loyang and in early 881, Chanan. They plundered these cities and gave the property of the rich to the poor. Huang Chiao announced the accession of his own dynasty, the “Great Chi” (named after the ancient state of Chi in Huang Chiao’s native province of Shantung), and began to form a state apparatus with the support of the middle and lower officials.

The Tang emperor, like Hsüan Tsung before him, fled to Szechwan. In the southern provinces through which Huang Chiao had marched, the local nobility began to form their own states after the insurgents had left.

The Tangs concluded an alliance with Li Ke-yung, known as the “one-eyed tiger”, who was chief of the Turkic tribe of Shato and lived in what is now the province of Shansi. But in promising this support Li Ke-yung also had his designs on the imperial throne.

In 883 Li Ke-yung drove the insurgents out of Chanan. Huang Chiao fled with his troops to a region which lay on the borders of present-day Shantung, Kiangsu and Anhwei. Here in 884 he committed suicide. The last of the insurgents were only exterminated in 901.

After the peasant war the empire fell apart. The period from 907 to 960 is referred to in Chinese historiography as the “Five Dynasties and Ten States”, since in Northern China, which was always considered as the legal base of the Chinese state, five dynasties succeeded each other within the space of half a century. Chinese historians consider that there were also ten states during this period (most of which were on the Yangtze and the regions to the south) that were independent of the government in Kaifeng (the capital of China during the 10th and

11th centuries), but in fact there were only seven. **Political fragmentation.** The Yangtze Valley and regions to the south were the scene of mass migrations by peasants from Northern China. The period of the "Five Dynasties and Ten States" was a direct continuation of the periods of the "Three Kingdoms" and the Nan Pei Chiao, when the south came increasingly to oppose the ruined north. The difference was that the south was not one, not three, but seven independent states. The length of rule of the southern dynasties was longer than the northern. This was because the situation in the south was more stable. While the north was being ravaged by war, the economy of the south was undergoing an upsurge. It became the basic producer of rice, salt and tea, and it was where foreign trade was concentrated. During this period the south also underwent a cultural renaissance.

Prior to the periods of the Tang and the "Five Dynasties and Ten States" the social development of China for all its specifics in comparison with Europe (in early medieval China centralization and urban life played a more important role) was essentially close to the European (the predominance of conditional landholding, dependence of the peasants on the state and the spread of a new religion—Buddhism). The chronological landmarks during that period were also similar: the collapse of the ancient world during the 3rd century and the change from early medieval empires to feudal fragmentation from the 8th to the 11th centuries. But from approximately the mid-10th century the history of feudal China took a different turn. The period of fragmentation proved to be very short-lived (some half-century) and it was replaced by a much longer period of centralization.

The invasions of neighbouring peoples at a time when China was stricken by internal strife resurrected the trend to unification. From 960 to 979 almost the whole territory of China proper with the exception of the northern regions and Peking which were occupied by the Khitans was united under the power of the Sung dynasty in Kaifeng.

The reunited China. The Sung Empire. From the time of the first Sung emperor, Chao Kuang-in, the government took measures to avoid a new collapse of the country. Changes were made among the commanders of the military units and among the troops in the garrisons with the idea of preventing

the commanders from becoming so strong as to threaten the authority of the central government. All responsible positions were held by civilians. The rights of the local authorities were curtailed to a minimum everything being decided by the centre. The Directorate of Office-Holding Affairs, which was set up in the capital as the highest administrative body, was given such power that its importance was hardly less than that of the ministers. Inspectors from the centre continually checked the activity of the local bodies.

A career in the state administration was based on a system of examinations, which had been introduced during the period of Sui-Tang, but which was fully developed only under the Sung dynasty. To enter the service a candidate had to pass a state examination. Every three years a list of candidates (up to 700) was drawn up and they were carefully examined on Confucianism and the humanities. The last and highest examination was held by the emperor himself. This system introduced a "democratic" element into the structure of the state, for officially there was nothing to stop even the son of a peasant who had enough knowledge from passing these examinations which gave access to the highest positions in the state. Of course, only a man with means was in a position to spend so many years learning classical wisdom. China under the Sung dynasty was a state in which the bureaucracy rapidly multiplied. Their enormous salaries, the gifts they received, their sinecures and all the various kinds of privileges they enjoyed gave the officialdom an exceptional position. The military were not trusted and their profession was scorned, nor did the Buddhist Church enjoy serious influence after their monasteries were destroyed during the Later Chou. By that time Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism had merged into a single syncretic religion whose temples were built in its three different varieties. But the cementing and guiding force of this new religion was Confucianism as being the religion of the officialdom—the state ideology. The picture of a bureaucratic empire which reached its zenith under the Sung has often led historians to believe that the predominant form of land-tenure was state ownership. In fact, however, this was not the case. The vast amount of large-scale landed property and the danger that state unity faced from such development gave rise to the need and presented the oppor-

tunity for the building of a gigantic, complex and ramified bureaucratic apparatus. Initially, bureaucratic centralization justified itself by providing in peace-time a growth in productive forces.

The economic development of China in the 11th and 12th centuries. The basis of the rural economy remained the estate, the *chuang tian*. Large landowners had thousands of hectares of land, holding more than half of all the arable land in the country. Estate lands were worked by tenants who were not permitted to leave their masters, in other words they were serfs. In the early 11th century these tenants comprised one-third of China's population and by the mid-12th century almost two-thirds. The tiny holdings of the free peasants which still remained (particularly in the south-east) were seized by the landowners, by the rich merchants who invested money in the land, and by the state which formed a network of its own estates, known as "government fields". By the mid-12th century the state possessed only some 7 per cent of all arable land. The private sector predominated.

Under the Sung dynasty the area of irrigated land increased as did agricultural production. The highest yield types of rice from Vietnam and Kampuchea were extensively cultivated throughout China. Tea was also widely cultivated. Under the Tangs wine was consumed on a massive scale, but under the Sungs tea-drinking became more common being introduced by the Buddhist monks who practised abstinence.

The increase in the general well-being of the country led to a rapid growth of the population. Whereas during the early medieval period the degeneration of the ancient Han civilization and the invasions of the barbarians had resulted in an enormous human losses, during the Tang period the population level that had existed under the Hans was restored. Between the 8th and the 12th centuries the population continued to increase rapidly (even despite the temporary political decline during the period of the "Five Dynasties and Ten States") reaching by the early 12th century approximately 130 million.

The movement of China's economic centre to the central and southern provinces which had been going on for almost one thousand years continued. Towns and cities grew—Kaifeng and Hangchow had populations of more than one million, while

Wuchang, Fuchow, Chuan-chow and Guangchow had more than 200,000. Of these trade and crafts centres only Kaifeng lay north of the Yangtze Valley. The tradesmen and merchants became united into guilds, and the fact that trade became increasingly more separated from crafts was reflected in the appearance of special merchant guilds.

Under the Sungs paper money was widely in use, having first made its appearance under the Tangs. Epoch-making inventions were made: water power was used to drive spinning mills, gunpowder, the compass, book printing (movable type was thought up by a blacksmith named Pi Sheng in the latter days of the "Five Dynasties and Ten States"), and porcelain. In these inventions China was ahead of Europe.

The growing towns and the new urban social estates were something alien to the Chinese ruling class, at best useful only as an additional source of income. The craft and merchants organisations were enmeshed in petty state control. Unlike medieval Europe no town in China had self-government. There were internal customs posts which not infrequently would demand half the cost of imported goods, but even so trade grew rapidly. Foreign trade was run almost exclusively by state monopoly.

The Sung government spent two-thirds of all its revenues on the army (which was the largest that had ever existed in China), while vast sums of money were swallowed up by the inflated bureaucratic apparatus. Not that the army could cope with its foreign enemies and as it suffered one defeat after another more and more money went abroad in the payment of tribute, while in the country itself the growing amount of debts had to be spread among the population.

The increasing oppression gave rise to sporadic outbreaks of revolt by the peasants, the soldiers, and the "heretical" sects of Buddhists, Manichaens and other groups. Unlike the earlier movements in China the slogan of the insurrectionists was "make the rich and the poor equal" so that there should be no "upper and lower orders". The demand for property equality was characteristic of the period in which private ownership and exploitation reached its highest in the Chinese economy. But another characteristic feature of the Sung period was the fact that local uprisings, even those that were on

China

a large scale, never developed into a peasant war on a national scale.

The attempts at reform under the Sung Empire. By the 11th century it had become clear that the Chinese state was suffering from some severe malady for which it needed to find a remedy. In such a strictly regulated and regimented society as the Sung Empire wished to be economic difficulties together with uprisings at home and weakness in face of external enemies inevitably led to projects for reform. These included the proposals made by the philosopher, Fan Chu-nian, and the poet, Su-yang Hsiu. Basically they concerned the need for improving the military organization and the bureaucratic apparatus. Essentially the solution was seen in the need to lessen the burden of feudal exploitation and provide the peasantry with a material incentive for preserving the empire. This meant gaining the latter's support by expanding the base on which the dominant class could rely. By way of experiment some of the bureaucrats in the provinces took separate measures to alleviate the position of the peasants. These included giving them loans from the treasury against future harvests, replacing labour obligations by a tax payable in money and controlling prices.

The reign of the Emperor Shen-tsung (1067-1085) saw the rise to power of a great reformer, Wang An-shi, who held the post of prime-minister from 1069 to 1074 and again from 1075 to 1076. His ultimate aim was also to restructure the army and the financial system so as to improve the country's defence capabilities. This could only be done by alleviating to a certain extent the position of the peasantry and transferring part of its burden on to the rich. A special directorate of reform was set up. These reforms were carried out right up to the death of Shen-tsung, i. e. for a period of approximately 17 years. An analysis of these reforms is of great interest for it makes it possible to see what were the vital interests of mature medieval society in China and to determine its capabilities, define its weak points and assess its conflicting tendencies.

The changes proposed by Wang An-shi were to a certain extent intended to protect the interest of the peasants. A form of state exploitation that was tantamount to slavery was to be replaced by a tax payable in money and assessed according to the size of individual properties. This tax was to be paid

both by bureaucrats and landowners, who had previously been exempt from the requirement. In the case of poor farmers the tax was to be replaced by conscription. The government gave the peasants loans against future harvests on favourable conditions, thus hitting hard at the practice of usury. The state took control of trade, buying goods at fixed prices and selling them on the internal market on an instalment basis. Deliveries of goods from the provinces to the state were to be replaced by centralized purchases at regulated prices. Finally, irrigation and tree planting were carried out on an intensive scale by the state, although participation in this work could be avoided by payments made either in money or in kind. Thus it is evident that these reforms were intended not only to increase the economic functions of the state, but to remove the cruder forms of exploitation that amounted to semi-slavery and to encourage commodity-money relations.

Farmlands were to be precisely measured so that taxation could be evenly distributed, but this latter proposal aroused such opposition from big landowners that it had to be stopped. The military reforms proposed by Wang An-shi amounted to moving the centre of gravity from the capital to the provinces. A people's militia was to be recruited through the communal organizations known as *Pao-chia* (a *Pao* was a group of ten families). Gradually the importance of the people's militia in comparison with the old army, which had been formed through conscription, began to increase. By 1076 the voluntary units together with the militia numbered more than 7 million.

Wang An-shi's reforms were a unique example in the Middle Ages of an attempt to radically strengthen the state at the expense of a certain curtailment of the egoistic intentions of big landowners. But it must be realized, of course, that not one of Wang An-shi's proposals infringed upon private ownership of the land and that his reforms were designed to save from external and internal threat that social structure which guaranteed the continual existence of large-scale landed property and its further growth. These reforms were in the interest of big landowners and the bureaucracy and they were planned by far-sighted members of the ruling class who were trying to enlarge the framework of that class and strengthen its military base. The concen-

trated will of the ruling class acted in contradiction to the egoistic aspirations of many of its own members. Thus long-term interests were acting counter to those of the short term.

The historical facts show, however, that the only attempt in world history to overcome the intrinsic contradictions of mature medieval society on the basis of a unique form of state feudalism was unsuccessful.

Wang An-shi's reforms were opposed from the outset by a united group of conservatives headed by the historian Se-ma Guang and supported by the Empress Gao, the mother of Shen-tsung. Twice they tried to get Wang An-shi to retire and on the death of Emperor Shen-tsung stopped his reforms completely. When the emperor's son, Che-tzung came of age and ascended the throne in 1093 he tried to continue the reforms, but came up against resistance from the reactionary officialdom. Under the next emperor, Hue-tsung, from 1100 on the reforms became the scourge of the people: labour and military obligations were joined in a single oppressive system and exemption from labour duty became nothing more than a means to extort vast sums of money from the people. Large-scale private property triumphed despite all attempts to contain it, and with it the centrifugal forces of the empire grew. Thus weakened from inside the Sung state now became the prey of foreign invaders.

China's wars with the neighbouring states.

The Mongol invasion. The once backward peoples who had been an object of scorn and oppression for the haughty Chinese nobility began to struggle for their independence and it was not long before their advance led them upon China. By the 10th century the Khitans, tribes of Mongolian origin living on the borders of what are now Mongolia and Manchuria, had formed a class society and a state. Their leader, Yelui Apoki, proved himself to be an able politician as well as a military commander. After his death the Khitan Empire took for itself the name of Liao. From the late Tang period the Khitans continually fought wars with China and by the mid-10th century they even took the capital, Kaifeng, which they held for a short time. The northern part of present-day Hopei (including Peking) and Shansi formed a stable alliance with Liao.

The second threat to the Sung Empire came from

the state of Western Hsia which was founded in the 10th century to the north-west of China by the Tangut tribes from Tibet. The Sung Empire spent the whole of the 11th century warring with the Khitans and the Tanguts, who were frequently victorious and able to extort regular tribute from China. But as their economies grew and commodity-money relations and private property increased, in Liao and Western Hsia the process of feudalization began which weakened the central governments and led to a decline in their powers.

In the 12th century new claimants to hegemony in Eastern Asia appeared in the form of the Juchen, Tungus-Manchurian tribes from Eastern Manchuria. Under their leader Agud they revolted against the Khitans, overthrew them and founded their own empire of Jin. The Juchens then formed an alliance with China and routed the Khitans completely. Some of these latter went into Central Asia and founded the state of Karakhitans (which lasted till 1211) in the valleys of the Talas and Chu rivers.

Although China got back Peking it was not able to take full advantage of the defeat of the Khitans. It had merely replaced one enemy by another, the more powerful Juchens. Wars broke out with Jin and the Sung Empire was further weakened by peasant revolts. The bureaucratic centralized system could do nothing to protect the country from conflicts between military and civilian factions. In despair at their own failing powers part of the Sung hierarchy sought safety in submission to the foreign enemy. In 1125 a war broke out between the Sung and the Juchens and two years later the Jin Empire took Kaifeng and the whole of Northern China. The Sung court moved to Hangchow, retaining its rule over Southern China (the period of the South Sung Empire 1127-1279).

A considerable part of the ruling hierarchy in China, who were more fearful of peasant uprisings at home than of "barbarian" invasions and who were at the same time quite aware of the insufficiency of their own strength, began to give in to the Juchens. This group were ready to share power with the Juchens so as to retain at least some of their privileges. From the point of view of the Chinese nobility the Juchens could maintain order in the country. The chief proponents of these views, which became extremely important in medieval

Chinese history, were the prime-ministers Chin Gui and after him Chia Se-tao.

The South Sung forces were led against the Juchens by Yue Fei, who subsequently became a favourite hero in Chinese popular tradition. But Yue Fei was also a true son of his class and on imperial instructions had put down a peasant uprising led by Yan Yao whose slogan was that "everything should be divided equally between the rich and the poor". But Yue Fei was a patriot and just as conscientiously fought against the Juchens. However, the appeasement faction at Hangchow, headed by the prime-minister Chin Gui, ordered the advance against Jin to be halted at the moment of its greatest triumph. Fearing Yue Fei's popularity the capitulators had him thrown into prison and executed. Today in Hangchow Yue Fei's grave is an object of reverence. Before the grave an unknown sculptor has placed the statues of Chin Gui and his wife on their knees. Over the centuries it has become traditional for the Chinese to spit at the statues as they walk past.

Wars between South Sung and Jin continued until Jenghis Khan and his Mongolian hordes fell upon the Juchens and brought Jin to its knees. On the eve of the destruction of the South Sung Empire the then prime-minister, Chia Se-tao decided upon an extreme measure. To strengthen the state he virtually confiscated one-third of the lands belonging to the private owners by buying them up for virtually worthless paper money. Chia Se-tao in doing this was attempting something that not even Wang An-shi had dared—the nationalization of the land. But this measure was too incomplete in its scope and too belated in its timing. The Sung Empire no longer had any real strength left. Chia Se-tao had spoiled relations between the government and the large-scale landowners, but had not succeeded in winning the support of the peasants. Like Chin Gui before him he had nothing left but to place his hopes on a foreign invasion which would ensure that at least some property

would be left in the hands of the Han ruling class.

During the 13th century the Juchen Empire was replaced by the Mongolian. In 1234 they completed their conquest of Jin. Chia Se-tao's forces were shattered and in 1276 Hangchow was taken by the Mongolians. The Sung emperor and his family were carried off to the north. The emperor's younger brother, who for a while had served as the banner of resistance, was soon also defeated. In 1279 the last remaining Sung patriots were driven to the sea where they perished—one of them throwing himself into the water with the young emperor on his shoulders. The whole of China was now run by the Mongols.

In sum the historical period encompassed by the "Five Dynasties and Ten States" and the Sung Empire showed a large growth in the country's productive forces and culture. The predominance of large-scale landed property, the dependence of the peasants, the formation of a single religious and ideological system and the emergence of social differentiation among the urban population all point to the further development of feudalism in Chinese society.

At the same time the difference between the Chinese and the European Middle Ages is obvious. Only the first centuries of mature feudal society in China—the 9th and the 10th—resemble the picture of political fragmentation in Europe. From the mid-10th to the 13th century China was a centralized bureaucratic empire run on its own Confucianist examination system.

By resisting the development of centrifugal forces Chinese bureaucratic feudalism weakened itself. As the bureaucratic machine required more and more resources, the peasantry, driven to desperation, broke out in revolt. Initiative shown in the provinces was crushed. State control over military nobility weakened the country's defences. Finally, if, like Eastern Europe, China had not fallen to the nomadic tribes through its feudal fragmentation, it had fallen, like Byzantium, into the hands of the conquerors.

The three-hundred-year rule of the Sung dynasty was a time not only for the growth of towns and the rise of the urban economy, but also for the continued flowering of culture.

Philosophical thought. Philosophical thought progressed. Without disputing the sacredness of the Confucian canons some philosophers began introducing into their teaching the elements of materialism. Others, on the contrary, claimed that the spiritual and the intellectual took precedence over the material. The predominant system was that developed by the philosopher Chu Hsi in the 12th century. He united Confucian theses not only with Taoist ideas (this to a certain extent had been done before him), but also with Buddhist, making Confucianism thereby into a comprehensive eclectic teaching that reflected on a philosophical level the fact that widespread among the people was a syncretic religion composed of Confucian, Buddhist and Taoist elements.

One of the main propositions put forward by Chu Hsi was the thesis that the original spiritual nature of man was given to him by Heaven, but the material substance, known as *Chi*, could eclipse it. It was the task of authority to help man to set free his original, heaven-sent nature. Chu Hsi sanctified social inequality and showed the importance of obeying the elders. Modified Confucianism as interpreted by Chu Hsi remained the official ideology of the ruling classes up until the 20th century.

In Chinese historiography there are two directly conflicting opinions on the ideas of Chu Hsi. Some historians define Chuhsianism as a dualism, an attempt to reconcile materialistic and idealistic principles in a single philosophy. Others deny the presence of materialistic elements in his teaching and, moreover, in the philosophy of feudal China as a whole. The facts, however, show that among the Chinese traditionalist philosophers there were those who were leaning, albeit inconsistently and within the general framework of official Confucianism, towards materialist views. Chu Hsi was not one of these. His system bore on the whole an idealistic character although it was embroidered with certain rationalistic details.

Historiography, poetry and the flourishing of painting. Apart from philosophical works a number of historical treatises have come down to us from the Sung period. These are the works of Ouyang Hsiu, Su Tung-po and Lu Yu. The Sung period was also renowned for its painting. The increasing part played in society by individuals (belonging to the ruling classes) gave rise to an interest in portraiture. At the same time the building of rich houses and other buildings gave rise to the need for ornamentation. All this was a stimulus to painting, first as a craft and then as an art.

Towards the end of the period of the "Five Dynasties and Ten States" painting departments began to be set up at the royal courts in some of the Chinese states. A unique genre was developed—the pictorial representation of flowers and birds which points to a considerable interest in nature and in the colourful material world.

After the accession of Chao Kuan-ying a department of painting was set up at the Higher Confucian Academy in the capital. Chao Kuan-ying ordered *objets d'art* to be collected from all over the empire, and they were used to decorate palaces or put into his private collections. Among Chao's descendants some emperors not only possessed artistic taste, but were themselves calligraphers and painters. One such emperor who typified this was Huei Tsung (1100-1125). Like the Tang emperor, Hsüan Tsung, before him, he was a weak ruler who was totally given over to personal pleasures and under whom the empire began its sharp decline. But also like Hsüan Tsung he patronized the arts and did much to further their development.

In 1111 Huei Tsung founded an Academy of Painting, which was one of the finest examples of culture and organization in Sung society. The Academy was formed on the basis of a previous department as an institute that was fully autonomous in respect of the Confucian Academy. To enter the Academy it was necessary to pass an examination and this involved painting a picture according to the theme suggested by verses selected by the emperor himself. Once accepted into the Academy the painter worked for several years as a student, mas-

tering the canons of Confucianism and studying artistic literature and painting. Only after this would he be given a certain rank. For a painting that the emperor liked the student would be awarded a violet robe or a belt with a small purse hanging from it on which was embroidered a fish in gold or silver thread. The highest award was the right to paint in the presence of the emperor. But despite the conferring of ranks, members of the Academy did not receive posts in the state apparatus and were considered lower than government officials.

A painting was required to fulfil three functions. These were described as illustrational, magical and moral. More often than not painters drew from memory rather than from life. A portrait was not obliged to resemble the original. It was more important that it should contain a certain idea and be symbolic. A landscape had to convey universal order and harmony (*li*). An artistic work had to be restrained and modest. Apart from Confucianism the artist was influenced by Buddhism, particularly the teachings of the Chan sect (*chan* meaning meditation) with its desire to find salvation through self-knowledge, meditation and self-improvement.

Ink or paints were used as the medium, and the predominating themes were landscapes, paintings of flowers and birds, portraits of the emperors, the Confucian wise men and court dignitaries, genre

painting was rare. The founder of the South Sung Empire, the grandson of Huei Tsung, who moved the capital to Hangchow and was himself a calligrapher and poet, moved the Academy of Painting to a new place on the shores of Lake Hsi-hu near Hangchow where it functioned for more than 50 years. The first rector of the Academy in the South Sung period was one of its former members, Li Tang, who lived by selling his paintings which at the time was possible. Li Tang was considered a master of the traditional landscape ("years and waters") and paintings of buffaloes against a natural background.

But more and more the artists' attention was drawn to man. Well known in this respect in the history of Chinese art is Ma Yuan, who came from a family of professional artists and lived in the late 12th-early 13th centuries. He left many paintings and frequently drew man in communion with nature.

But it was the pictorial representation of flowers and birds that achieved particular perfection in the later years of the Academy's existence. In times of trouble when foreign invasion was an ever-present threat the artists sought tranquility in admiring a green leaf lit up by the rays of the sun or the trembling of a fluffy bird on a branch. The lotus flower on water symbolized man who remained pure amongst impurity.

Mature Feudalism in China and Its Decline

The overthrow of Mongol domination. The Ming Empire. The hundred-year domination of the Mongol Yuan dynasty, which was founded by Genghis Khan's grandson, Hubilai, was a time of devastation and harsh oppression. In the mid-14th century a revolt broke out that was directed against foreign and domestic oppression. This revolt resulted in the overthrow of the Yuan dynasty. The leader of the insurgents, Chu Yuan-chang, who had once been a poor peasant and then a fugitive monk, became the founder of the last imperial dynasty of Chinese origins, to which he gave the name Ming ("bright"). The new Ming dynasty was faced with a task of great importance—the restoration of the country from its devastation. The lands of the conquered Yuans and their followers together with the

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other lands that had been left neglected were made the property of the state. The state then willingly made them available to the farmers who were the direct producers, but was in no hurry to increase the holdings of the private feudal landowners. As a result the percentage of cultivated land rose sharply and the grain harvests were almost three times as great as they had been during the last years of the Yuans. Two registers were drawn up, the Yellow Register and the Fish Scale Register (so called because the maps contained in it looked like a fish scale). These registered and virtually attached to the soil the tax-paying farmers. Apart from these state lands there were also the private lands, whose owners were taxed at a lesser rate than were the holders of the state lands. All office-bearers were

freed from taxation. The numerous relatives of the emperor received estates where they maintained their own courts and troops, which, of course, was a measure which ran counter to the policy of strict centralization that was implemented by the government.

To a certain extent the Ming Empire was heir to the Sung Empire. Under the Sung the foundations of feudal society had been laid, while under the Ming the state and ideological institutions that came to typify Chinese feudalism were finally established on those foundations.

The Ming Empire restored Confucianism (in the form prescribed by Chu Hsi) as the official state ideology. The bureaucratic apparatus and the examination system were brought back. In this respect the Ming government acted as the direct successor to the policy of the Sung. Nanking was made the capital of the empire and the feudal lords of Central China became the main support for the government. However, the rapid growth of commodity-money relations in the Yangtze basin soon came into contradiction with the crude bureaucratic methods of the Ming regime which impeded fast economic growth. During the second half of the rule of Chu Yuan-chang (late 14th century) the government launched a terror campaign against all those who were or appeared to be discontented. Chancellor Hu Wei-yung and many other high officials were accused of plotting. They were seized, tortured and put to death. The post of chancellor and the central government council were done away with.

After Chu Yuan-chang his grandson, Chu Yunwen, was made emperor instead of his sons. He announced his intention of "making changes in policy". The government began to reform the administrative system, recalled those who had been exiled by Chu Yuan-chang and took measures to curb the power of the eunuchs which was becoming too great. But the attempt to do away with the landed estates drove big feudal lords, the emperor's relatives to revolt. The eldest of Chu Yuan-chang's remaining sons, Chu Ti, led a revolt in Peking and after a four-year struggle took Nanking and became emperor (1403).

In 1421 the new government moved the capital from Nanking to Peking, which in many respects marked a reorientation from the Central Chinese feudal lords to those of Northern China. This was

a reflection of the new situation in which Northern China was increasingly becoming the centre for the formation of the Han (Chinese) nation, which had been developing throughout the whole of the medieval period. By the 15th century the political isolation of Southern and Central China from Northern China was ended. Under Peking the north became the main bulwark for the unity of the empire. But at the same time the economic backwardness of the north, in relation to the advanced regions of the lower Yangtze with the comparatively highly developed towns, trade and crafts, remained. The fact that the political unification of the country began around Peking and not Nanking shows that the pockets of high economic development along the lower reaches of the Yangtze still remained isolated and relatively weak. Furthermore, after the capital was transferred to Peking, there began the systematic plundering of the central and southern provinces with a considerable part of their grain being shipped to the north.

The Ming period like the Sung can be considered a time of feudal maturity in China when the forms of property inherent in that social formation reached their highest development, and the specific, individual features of China in that formation, like bureaucratic centralism with its examination system, most clearly appeared. The Ming period differs sharply from the Sung for the fact that China's external position in the 15th and 16th centuries was stable. The wars that were waged by the Ming government at the time were not very dangerous with the exception of one occasion in 1449 when the West Mongolian (Oirat) army completely defeated the Chinese and took the emperor prisoner. But the attempt to take Peking was rebuffed; the Mongols, though, were no longer trying to conquer the whole of China.

Contacts between China and other states. Relations with Europe. An important foreign political act by the Chinese government was the decision of Emperor Chu Ti to send a powerful fleet under the command of the eunuch, Cheng He, to the West. Leaving Suchow in 1405, the Chinese fleet visited the countries of South-East Asia and India and reached the eastern shores of Africa. At that time little more than half a century separated the Chinese from the Portuguese who were to visit the same places, sailing from the west. But the voyage of

Cheng He, who returned in 1433, was not repeated since it did not bring any direct advantages and cost too much to finance. It was purely a political enterprise designed to demonstrate China's power.

Under Chu Ti China tried to seize Vietnam (1405), but success there was short lived. The Vietnamese rose in 1428 and won back their independence.

From the 14th to the 16th centuries Ming China faced a serious threat from the Japanese pirates, but the defeats inflicted on them by the Chinese navy forced them to cease their attacks on the Chinese coast. Towards the end of the 16th century the Ming government gave military aid to Korea, which was suffering under Japanese aggression, and the Japanese invaders were driven out.

During the last century of the Ming Empire China's international position underwent a radical change. Europe, to which the Chinese had still never managed to sail, now came to them. At first it was by sea in the person of the Portuguese whose ships reached China in 1516. They traded and plundered along the coast and in 1557 virtually took the whole port of Macao (Lomen) on the South China coast and made it their stronghold. The Portuguese were followed by the Spanish, the Dutch and the British. Dutch colonizers took the Chinese island of Taiwan in 1624 and held it for several decades. Jesuit missionaries appeared in Peking and the Italian scholar, Matteo Ricci, came to make a study of the country which did much to help Europeans get better acquainted with it.

Exactly one hundred years after the first establishment of naval contacts between China and Europe the first contacts were made overland. This was done by Russia which in the late 16th and early 17th centuries stretched across the whole of Siberia and bordered on the Mongolian principalities, beyond which lay China. In 1604 Tomsk was founded and in 1618 following the "Time of Troubles" in Russia (1605-1613) the first semi-official embassy set out from this city for China headed by Cossack Ivan Petlin from Tomsk. Three months and twenty-two days later they reached Peking. In 1619 Petlin reported in Moscow on his journey.

Although in establishing relations with Europe the Chinese remained a purely passive side, for its self-sufficient feudal economy had not yet found impetus for new markets, even the first attempt to

include China in the system of world political relations must be regarded as a fact of great historical significance.

The economic development of China from the 15th to the early 17th century. The relatively peaceful climate abroad during the 15th and 16th centuries helped economic development in China, particularly in the territories which had formerly been South Sung—the lower reaches of the Yangtze and the regions to the south. After the sharp decline in the population in the 13th and 14th centuries it now began to grow again. During the 15th century it reached the level that it had stood at under the Sung in the early 12th century and by the 16th century it was already much larger. Around 1580 there were approximately 200,000,000 Chinese. But later it was reduced somewhat due to the general economic decline of the Ming Empire and the terrible epidemics of 1588 and 1642.

Crafts and trades became increasingly specialized and separated from farming. In Suchow and Hangchow silk-weaving flourished; in Sungkiang and Shanghai it was cotton manufacture; in the village of Kingtehchen porcelain manufacture grew so big that the village became a great centre, as did the village of Foshan through the metal-working industry. In the regions along the lower Yangtze and to the south lay more than a third of all the towns in China and almost all the centres of commodity production. But in the rest of the country development progressed at an incomparably slower rate. The peasant owners and the peasant holders of state land began to gradually lose their lands and become tenants. By the early 17th century almost 90 per cent of the peasants on the lower reaches of the Yangtze farmed other people's lands. In 1581 the Ming government tried to replace payment in kind by a single monetary tax. The landowners too began to collect rent in money. But some of the peasants who lost their land could not afford to become tenants or find work in the towns. These were forced into the army of homeless vagabonds who wandered all over the country.

By the late 16th-early 17th centuries rudimentary capitalist relations had arisen in the most developed crafts. In the case of cotton weaving the merchant would give out work to the individual households and pay for the finished product, or he would set up a workshop in which the labour was divided among

the workers. Dispersed and, more particularly, centralized manufactories all developed in the same area—the lower reaches of the Yangtze and the south-east. All these developments, which show that primary accumulation was only beginning in China and that capitalist relations were forming slowly, allow us to conclude that by the early 17th century China was at approximately the same stage of development as Italy, an advanced European country, had reached by the mid-14th century. In Italy the early capitalist elements were crushed two centuries later by the feudal superstructure. This also happened in China but only a few decades after the new capitalist elements had made their appearance.

The position of these new elements in China was in one respect more difficult than in 14th-century Italy, because the level there of feudal political fragmentation was much lower than in Europe. China was enmeshed in a web of bureaucratic, feudal control, which strangled the growth of advanced social forms. However, in one place—the south-east coast of China, i. e. directly adjacent to the most advanced regions, a local merchant group that was relatively autonomous from the central government had control of the towns. Here the merchant family of Cheng acquired unprecedented power. The merchant, Cheng Chi-lung, who had got rich on contraband trade but who was recognized by the Ming government, lived in his own fortress near the port of Chüanchow, had complete control over the province and all sea trade in the area and received an annual income of 10 million *liang*, which is comparable with the revenues then received by the whole of Britain. Yet Cheng Chi-lung was just a minor official of the Ming government, and the nobles spoke scornfully of his lack of education. What we appear to have here is a completely new phenomenon in medieval China whereby the Chinese merchants were taking the first steps towards becoming an autonomous force within the framework of feudal society.

The decline of the feudal system. Urban unrest. The 16th and 17th centuries in feudal China were a period of decline and dissolution. The enormous growth of land holdings and the accumulation of tremendous wealth in the hands of a few resulted in an increasingly large number of the ruling class becoming parasites. When Chu Yuan-chang did away with the chancellorship and the governing

council, it was proposed that the emperor himself would manage all the affairs of state. In fact the emperors who followed Chu Ti had no interest at all in politics. This now became a matter for the secretaries, the most important of whom was Chang Chui-cheng (1567-1582). He instituted a tax reform and tried to strengthen government control over the bureaucrats and examine proposals made in the provinces.

The ruin of peasants and the increasing oppression from the landlords and the state gave rise in the 15th and 16th centuries to a number of uprisings, chiefly among the fugitive peasants. In the late 16th century the head of one such uprising called himself the rightful heir to the Sung dynasty, which appeared in the eyes of the peasants to be better and more just than the Ming. In the early 17th century a peasant uprising in the province of Shantung was led by a sect which called itself the White Lotus. It lasted for four years and its suppression was followed by a series of hunger riots, harbingers of the great peasant war which swept across China.

In the late 16th and early 17th centuries the first symptoms of yet another unusual phenomenon for medieval China began to make their appearance. This was urban unrest that stemmed directly from the need to protect commerce and craft manufacture. The main cause of this unrest were the tax-collectors. In Suchow the owners of the weaving shops, enraged at tax increases, closed their gates and kept the workers out in the streets thereby provoking them to riot (1601). The weavers who were dressed in rags and bare-footed attacked officials and burned their homes. But they had no weapons and did not engage in looting. According to the sources they even apologized to those whose houses they broke into by mistake. In 1603 there was a demonstration of miners in Peking. They came from the mines that lay to the west of the city looking "grubby and dressed in short peasant shirts". They protested against the oppression of the tax inspectors by "filling the streets and shouting their grievances". In both cases the government decided not to carry out mass repressions, but to change the tax inspectors. In Wuchang the crowd seized 16 tax-collectors and threw them into the waters of the Yangtze (1601). In other places there were other incidents where the people burned the tax offices and killed the tax-collectors.

The Tung-lin group. The new developments in the economy and the contradictions between them and the existing socio-economic relations resulted in the appearance of a conscious opposition with its own programme which tried to organize itself.

The Tung-lin group opposed the granting of lands to the emperor's relatives and the growth of large-scale landownership. They demanded a reduction in the taxes levied on trade and industry and an end to the state monopoly of mining. They were out to encourage private enterprise and the free hire of labour. They proposed closing the state silk mills and porcelain manufactories so as to clear the way for private enterprise. This programme was a progressive development towards the emergence of early capitalist forms.

The Tung-lin group, who were called by their contemporaries the "group of honest men", attacked the bribery and embezzlement that were rife in the state apparatus. Referring to the "principles of ancient Confucianism", they criticized the dominant Chu Hsian ideology and opposed dogmatism and scholasticism. Their views were those of the predecessors of the Renaissance.

But the Tung-lin group were not trying to make a complete break with Confucianism and develop their own philosophy. Nor did they make any appeals to the masses, upholding instead the notion of "just" emperor and "good" bureaucrats. The Tung-lin group waged a long struggle to get their candidate, Li San-tsai, made a member of the State Council. But fierce opposition from their opponents ultimately meant that the Tung-lin group were unsuccessful. The advocates of reform pinned their hopes on Chu Chang-lo, the heir to the throne, who was sympathetic towards them. But his claim to the throne, even though he was the legal heir, was the subject of passionate dispute. The social struggle became interweaved with the struggle at the court. Finally, Shen-tung did appoint Chu Chang-lo as his official heir (1601), and after the former's death in 1620, Chu Chang-lo became emperor. During the few months of his reign many of the Tung-lin group were appointed to positions of administrative authority in the state. He issued a decree whereby the collecting of taxes from the mining industry was to be taken out of the hands of the eunuchs and handed over to the ordinary bureaucrats. But the emperor's reign was short-lived. Taking to his bed

with a minor ailment he was given a "red pill" from which he died. In Chinese cultural tradition this episode is known as the "Story of the Red Pill".

The next emperor had no other interests but the pursuit of his hobby—carpentry. Under his reign the eunuch faction gradually got back all their power and ousted the Tung-lin group. Hope for reforms "from above" thus collapsed. Now it only remained to wait for the spontaneous explosion "below" with which the censors had long frightened the emperor.

The Peasant War of 1628-1646. The harsh treatment meted out by the landlords and the state combined with poor harvests and epidemics led to revolts in many provinces. In 1628 a peasant war broke out which swept across the whole of China. By the time of its second stage (1639-1644) it raged over an enormous territory and engulfed millions of people. The peasant army was comprised of several hundred thousand men. The military council under its peasant leader, Li Tzu-cheng, became an embryonic government. In late 1643 the main forces of the peasant army took Sian and Li Tzu-cheng gave them three days for looting. In early 1644 Li Tzu-cheng was proclaimed emperor in Sian. The insurgents gave the peasants the property of the rich and promised to put an end to taxation (this was a promise they failed to keep). In 1644 Li Tzu-cheng's army advanced on Peking and taking advantage of the complete dissolution in the enemy camp, entered the city. Still today visitors are shown the spot in Peking where Li Tzu-cheng wearing a felt hat and dressed in blue, descended from his horse. The Ming dynasty had fallen.

But the empire that had been founded by Li Tzu-cheng could not feel safe while the main forces of the Ming army were still at large. These had been stationed along the Great Wall as protection against the Manchus. They were commanded by General Wu San-kuei whose headquarters were at Shanhai-guan.

The Ming regime which had been formed in the 14th century during the struggle with foreign oppressors, was imbued with the ideology of feudal patriotism. It encouraged hatred for such national traitors as Chin Gui and the worship of such heroes as Yue Fei, and it encouraged Confucian scorn for the barbarians. Yet when the empire was collapsing under the blows of the insurgent peasants, the vast

majority of the ruling class turned to the despised "barbarians" as the lesser evil. National treason seemed preferable to the loss of property and privilege.

Wu San-kuei would not submit to the peasant government (apart from general hatred for the insurgents, he had a personal grievance, for one of the rebel leaders in Peking had taken his favourite concubine for his own harem). Wu San-kuei concluded a secret alliance with the Manchurian leader, Durgan, who was regent during the minority of the Manchurian khan. Li Tzu-cheng advanced on Shanhaiguan, occupied the town and prepared for a decisive battle with Wu San-kuei. In the heat of the fight the Manchu cavalry struck the insurgents in the flank and Li Tzu-cheng, suffering great losses, was forced to retreat and abandon Peking. Thus the Ming capital was taken by the Manchus who gave Wu San-kuei the opportunity to pursue Li Tzu-cheng's army.

The Manchu Ching Empire. In 1644 the Manchu emperor ascended the throne in China. The dynasty was called Ching, meaning "pure". The Chinese feudal lords who were now in service to new lords continued with the task of crushing the peasant war. Li Tzu-cheng retreated to Shensi after a bitter quarrel with Li Sin, who suggested advancing into his native province of Honan. The quarrel ended in Li Sin being killed. But the insurgents could not hold Shensi and were defeated by Wu San-kuei. In 1645 Li Tzu-cheng was killed. In 1646 the rest of the insurgent state which had been formed in the province of Szechwan was done away with. Its founder, Chan Sian-chung, who had always acted independently of Li Tzu-cheng, was killed in battle.

The peasant war was put down, but the Manchu invasion of China continued until the 1670s. Other patriotic leaders, like Shih Ha-fa, staunchly held part of the lower Yangtze, where the flourishing industrial and commercial towns served as the main bulwark of the patriotic forces. Many of those who had fought in the peasant war also fought against the Manchus. But after a long period of heroic resist-

ance the town of Yanchou fell to the Manchus who slaughtered its population and executed Shih Ha-fa who had led its defence.

A special feature of the anti-Manchu campaign of the 17th century distinguishing it from the anti-Mongolian struggle of the 13th century when the Sung dynasty fell was the noticeably independent role of the towns and cities in the rich south-east. In Fukien, for example, it was the merchant leader, Cheng Chi-lung, who led the resistance, since he virtually controlled the area like an independent ruler.

After he surrendered to the Manchus and was put to death by them, his place was taken by his son, Chen Chen-kung. Taking the port of Siamen (in Fukien) Chen Chen-kung twice advanced on Nanking. Then he took the island of Taiwan and made it his base after driving out the Dutch colonists. After Chen Chen-kung's death Taiwan was ruled by his son and then his grandson. It was not taken by the Ching government until 1683.

Before that the Manchus had put down a group of Chinese feudal lords headed by Wu San-kuei who believed that the new rulers had left them far too little power. But the greater part of the feudal lords accepted the Ching rule.

The Manchus extended the borders of China, taking a number of territories that were not part of the empire under the Mings. They left a large amount of property in the hands of the Chinese ruling class and retained the Sung-Ming bureaucratic system with its examinations and ideological education of the people in the spirit of Chu Hsi's Confucianism. The Chinese feudal lords willingly served them, especially since a gradual process of assimilation was going on between the two peoples. The high economic level that had existed in the 16th century was not restored until the 18th century. But the bureaucratic system and the harsh oppression practised by the Manchu military caste impeded further social progress. The defeat of the progressive forces in the late 16th-early 17th centuries and the Manchu invasion held up China's development and made a new crisis inevitable.

China

Chinese Culture in the Late Middle Ages

(13th-17th centuries)

Literature. Chinese medieval drama. The 13th and 14th centuries were a time of great migrations and intermixing of populations. They also witnessed the collapse of the old foundations of society and saw the country devastated as a result of foreign invasion and popular uprisings against the invaders. Finally it was in the 14th century that the Chinese national state was restored from the ruins. It was during this period that colloquial forms of Chinese further developed showing tendencies towards linguistic unification. Popular literary genres that could be read by the ordinary people also became more frequent.

The period of Mongolian domination was characterized by the development of drama. In the course of a century almost 600 plays were written and their plots were passed by word of mouth. Sixty-five plays, fourteen of which have been preserved, were written by the great Chinese playwright, Kuan Han Ching. His most famous work was *The Wronging of T'ou* or *Snow in June*.

The play bemoans the fate of a Chinese woman, T'ou, who refuses to marry the man she does not love and is then forced to suffer persecution. The drama embodies the age-old popular dream of the final triumph of justice.

Another famous playwright of the Yuan period, Wang Shih-fu, was particularly renowned for his work, *West Wing*. It was based on the *Story of Ying-Ying*, which was written by the Tang poet, Yuan Chen in the 9th century. It also dealt with the tragedy of a young woman and speaks up in defence of the rights of the individual.

The Ming "novel". After the overthrow of the Yuan dynasty as a result of an uprising, there was much greater interest in Chinese society for popular traditions, heroes and the history of the mass movements. From the 14th to the 16th centuries the predominant genre in literature was the monumental epics, which were composed on the basis of the stories told by the wandering story tellers. If Yuan drama brought literary subjects to the masses, the Ming "novel", on the contrary, brought the fruits of oral popular creation to the world of written litera-

ture. The three best known of these "novels" were the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, *Water Margin* and *Journey to the West*.

The *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* and *Water Margin* seem to have been written in the 14th century, although the former was only published in the late 15th century. During the early Ming dynasty a large number of writers recorded and retold the old folk tales. The best known of these writers were Shih Nai-an and Lo Kuan-chung. For this reason there are a number of versions of the "novel" *Water Margin*, the best of which according to Chinese literary criticism is that of Shin Nai-an.

The *Water Margin* is a story of the epic struggle of the noble brigands in the times of the Sung dynasty. Amid the numerous twists of fortune that occur to the countless characters of the "novel" the constant theme is that of resistance.

The *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* was written by Lo Kuan-chung. Its theme is the internecine strife that followed the collapse of the Han Empire in the 3rd century. The reunification of China in the 14th century under the Ming dynasty naturally gave rise to the idea of cycles in Chinese history in which imperial unity (under the Han, the Tang, the Sung and the Ming) alternated with periods of political crisis. "The great forces of the Underheaven," runs the first line of the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, "though long alienated from each other, strive to unite and after a long period of unification fall apart once again—so is the popular belief."

Lo Kuan-chung based his work on the official history of the Three Kingdoms, but filled it full of oral legends written in popular idiom. The story is centred around Liu Pei, Kuan Yu and Chan Fei, sworn brothers, who take an oath in a peach orchard to unite their hearts and strength "in the service of the state to bring peace to the common people". The fourth hero is the military commander, Chu-ke Liang, whose character at times eclipses even those of the three sworn brothers. The villain of the story is Tsao Tsao, a cruel and cunning despot.

The basic concept of the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* is contradictory. In general the novel supports

the reunification of China but the heroes want this to be done not by the methods used by Tsao Tsao, but through the acts of more just and noble rulers. However, the experience of the common people suggests that things do not usually happen this way in history and therefore the "novel" has a sad ending: the heroes are killed, their kingdoms perish and even the dynasty of Tsao Tsao is overthrown—all under the relentless wheel of history.

The third classical work of the Ming period—*Journey to the West* comes from the pen of 16th-century writer, Wu Ch'en-en. The son of a rich and well-read merchant, Wu Ch'en-en wanted a career in the civil service, but only at the very end of his life was able for a few years to serve as an aide to a provincial governor. He lived on his literary earnings and from copying papers.

Journey to the West is based on folk tales about the pilgrimage of Brother Suan Tsang to India in the 8th century in search of the sacred Buddhist books. The real hero of the work, however, is not Suan Tsang himself, but his fellow-traveller, Sun Wukung (king of the Apes). This cunning, unusually energetic and merry ape, who is devoted to Suan Tsang and helps him to overcome all the obstacles on his journey, was especially loved by the millions of readers of *Journey to the West*. Despite its form—the description of a Buddhist pilgrimage—*Journey to the West* is virtually humorous in its attitude to the gods, treating even Buddhism in a somewhat satirical vein.

The end of the 16th century saw the appearance of a novel by an unknown writer entitled *Jin, Ping, Mei*. Unlike the previous three works this was not a story of heroic deeds but of a family of landowners in Shantung Province in the 12th century. The novel was later banned for its erotic elements, but in fact it was a satire on corruption among the higher ranks of society. The novel, which takes its title from the names of its three heroines, has as its positive character the same Wu Sung who appears in *Water Margin*, though this time he is the brother-in-law of one of the heroines. *Jin, Ping, Mei* had great influence on two works which appeared subsequently during the 18th century—*Dream of the Red Chamber* and *The Unofficial History of the Confucians*.

To sum up we can note that during the Yuan-Ming period the predominance of such mass genres as the play and the novel and the spread of the col-

loquial language reflect the final formation of the Han (Chinese) people as a nation. All this refutes the opinion that is often expressed about the general social stagnation of the Ming period.

The development of philosophy. The predominant philosophical school under the Ming was that of Chu Hsi. The subjective-idealistic orientation increased in the 15th century in the works of the philosopher, Wang Yan-ming, whose theories concerned the "innate knowledge", which was supposedly present in the soul. He believed that matter did not exist outside the soul. But soon after Wang Yan-ming materialistic notes rang again in the writings of Wang Ken, who believed that the "daily life of the people was the essence of Tao". He called upon people to love and respect one another. His adherents included many peasants and craftsmen.

Three great thinkers—Wang Ch'uan-shan, Huang Tsung-hsi and Ku Yan-wu—appeared only at the very end of the Ming dynasty when it was about to disappear. The most prominent among them was Wang Ch'uan-shan.

Huang Tsung-hsi and Ku Yan-wu were almost ten years older than Wang Ch'uan-shan. Their opposition to the corrupt bureaucratic regime of the Ming inclined Huang and Ku to justify some degree of decentralizing the empire. Only Wang Ch'uan-shan clearly understood that replacing feudal fragmentation with political centralization was the inevitable consequence of the corresponding stage of historical development.

Huang Tsung-hsi saw the reason for China's decline in the lawlessness that reigned under the Ming dynasty and called for the law to be made binding upon everyone, including the emperor. The 17th-century thinkers rightly connected centralization and bureaucracy with the education system and the selection of candidates for state posts by examination. He proposed reforming the structure of examinations making schools less dependent on the central powers and turning them into bodies for airing public opinion. He proposed restoring the post of chancellor and setting up a ministry that would limit the personal power of the monarch. He wanted to reduce the number of the emperor's wives so as in this way to reduce the number of eunuchs and their influence at court. But even Huang Tsung-hsi did not go as far as to propose that the emperor

should be elected; and the chancellor and ministers according to his scheme should be appointed by the emperor.

But these proposals, which were aimed at achieving a relative lessening of the power of the monarch, came into a certain amount of contradiction with another project designed by Huang Tsung-hsi. This was to restore the ancient method of land utilization, and spread throughout China the form of collective land-holding, which was still preserved under the Ming in the frontier military settlements. This idea shows that Huang Tsung-hsi saw the harm that came not only from the limitless personal power of the emperor, but also from the concentration of enormous land holdings in the hands of a few lords.

Huang Tsung-hsi and Ku Yan-wu were both materialistically-minded thinkers who recognized the primacy of the material (*chi*) over the spiritual (*li*).

Like Huang Tsung-hsi but less decisively Ku Yan-wu, stood for partial devolution of the central powers. In an attempt to put an end to despotism and bureaucracy he wanted all people to have the right to promotion in the public service.

Huang Tsung-hsi and Ku Yan-wu took active part in the struggle against the Manchu invaders, as a result of which Ku Yan-wu was imprisoned. The third and greatest of 17th-century Chinese thinkers, Wang Ch'uan-shan, followed in the steps of the old materialist philosophers, Wang Chung and Chang Tsai (interpreting the latter in a more materialist spirit than the philosopher himself). More consistently than any of the previous Chinese philosophers, Wang Ch'uan-shan stressed the primacy of the material over the ideal. He was sharply critical of idealistic philosophy and approached history from the point of view of continuous development, claiming that each political system should be judged in terms of its own times and eventually give place to another. Thus the autocratic power of the monarch was a step forward in comparison to the individual principalities. Wang Ch'uan-shan criticized the cyclic theories (of Tung Chung-shu, et al.), upholding the concept of historical progress. In complete disagreement with Confucian traditions he rejected the need to follow the ancient precepts. "Times change," he asserted, "and with them conditions... Each era has its own approach..." Wang Ch'uan-shan divided the history of China into three

great periods: (1) the patriarchal period, which existed prior to the legendary Sia dynasty, when there was no coercion and no taxes, when the rulers were just and when the country was "united and at the same time not united"; (2) the period of fragmentation, which existed from the Sia to the Sung dynasty with temporary unifications under the Han and under the Tang; (3) the period of unity which began with the Sung.

Though he disagreed with such immutable postulates of Confucianism as reverence for the past and idealism, Wang Ch'uan-shan nevertheless considered himself a Confucian and criticized all other Chinese traditional schools—Buddhism, Taoism and Legalism. He believed it was wrong to see heavenly laws set against human desires (as did Chen Hao and Chu Hsi), for heavenly laws, on the contrary, were determined through human desires. But personal desires should, he believed, coincide with the interests of society as a whole. Wang Ch'uan-shan extolled the principle of *gen* (humanity) in everything—in relations between the lord and the peasant, between the government and the people, and between the highest and the lowest. He was equally against despotism "from above" as he was against revolts "from below". People, he believed, were by nature unequal—there were those who were clever and those who were not. But the former ought not to use their ability against the latter and the latter ought not to let their stupidity be used against them.

The progressive programme of the mid-17th century philosophers was the result of the economic and cultural achievements of China made during the 16th and early 17th centuries. It went in the same general direction as the Tung-lin movement, but was much more carefully thought out than were the views of the Tung-lin thinkers.

The works of these philosophers were imbued with the spirit of patriotism. Wang Ch'uan-shan said it was the duty of every Chinese to defend his native land, for a people that had lost its independence had lost all its moral fibre. Tracing examples of capitulatory moods in the policies of the Chinese ruling classes from the time when the Tang emperor called upon the Uigurs to crush the An Lu-shan rebellion, Wang Ch'uan-shan condemned these acts as treason. He stood for the right of each nation to exist independently and condemned both

aggression against China and Chinese aggression against other countries. His principle was "They do not attack us and we do not attack them."

However, Wang Ch'uan-shan could not rise above the traditional idea that the Chinese differed radically from all the other peoples, deriving this distinction from the geographic environment. His just hatred of the Manchu invaders led him to make statements to the effect that the principle of *gen* should not be extended to barbarians and that as many of them as possible should be killed. The fight against the barbarians, he declared, should not be called a war "since destroying them was not brutality, deceiving them was not treachery and seizing their territory and confiscating their property was

not injustice". This chauvinism made Wang Ch'uan-shan the precursor of Chinese bourgeois nationalism. These beliefs even justified Chinese aggression and directly contradicted the philosopher's other beliefs that all nations should have the right to live independently and his doctrine of mutual non-aggression.

Liang Chi-chao, the great Chinese philosopher who lived at the turn of this century, called Huang Tsung-hsi, Ku Yan-wu and especially Wang Ch'uan-shan the "great teachers". "In the last 200 years," he wrote, "people have known and heard little about them, but today their thought has suddenly like an electric shock struck the hearts of many young people..."

Chapter X

The History and Culture of Medieval Japan

A description of medieval Japanese culture, like that of any other that has made a significant contribution to world culture, and an evaluation of the role and place of medieval Japan in this context, are extremely important for understanding the general and the particular in the development of human history.

Though much younger than the cultures of India, China and other Oriental states, Japanese culture has given the world a number of things for which it is famous: the medieval romance and the theatres of Nō and Kabuki, the medieval portrait, the tea ceremony, the dry, philosopher's garden as it is called, unique graphics and the art of flower arrangement. Almost all of these were created during the Middle Ages, when the foundations of Japanese national culture were formed.

But medieval Japan inherited cultural traditions that had been formed over an immense period stretching right back to neolithic times.

Proto-Japanese culture. Formed originally as a unique amalgam of the neolithic cultures of numerous tribes that had migrated from the continent and the Oceanic islands, proto-Japanese culture was highly dynamic and flexible, and able to perceive and rework many different cultural influences. And despite the similarity of this essentially transitory cultural phenomenon to analogous cultures in South-East Asia, the Far-Eastern Littoral and Oceania, it was on its basis that a highly unique culture developed on the Japanese Islands, a culture whose bearers were able to create a fairly viable state that was capable in later times of challenging some of the world's leading powers.

The Yamato State. The alliance of tribes from northern Kyushu and Central Japan which in the 3rd century A. D. became the first Yamato State was an important social advance and a turning point in the process of forming the Japanese nation. The farming culture of the Kinai tribes which spread from the Yamato State to Central Japan gradually developed into a common-Japanese culture with its own language, mythology and religion.

The Yamato State developed under the continuous influence of foreign culture, a fact which stimulated and to a certain extent accelerated the development of its own culture. It has been so far impossible to establish the precise chronological framework for the emergence of all the institutions of this state, and impossible to decide the original nature of the state, i. e. whether it was slave-owning or feudal. This was especially so, since the state itself, its apparatus and its forms of political struggle were in large measure determined by the desire to imitate foreign models, particularly feudal China and Korea. But the process of transition from a tribal union to a state evidently began long before the Yamato State was formed and it is unknown what forms of state existed in northern Kyushu and Central Japan. Perhaps the slave-owning system was brought from the north to the central regions, where feudalism was already developing. These and other questions make it difficult to know what precisely was the social and political system in Yamato and in the states of Asuka and Nara which inherited it. The only thing that is beyond doubt is that Yamato culture possessed a homogeneity that was hitherto unknown and that the people who lived in the Ya-

mato State were almost indistinguishable from the medieval Japanese. The language, the material culture, the character of the economy and the way of life of the mass of the ordinary people underwent no radical changes between this and the succeeding period. Thus the traditions of Japanese culture go back to the time of the first Yamato State.

From the 5th to the 7th centuries the Yamato State lay midway between a barbarian kingdom and a feudal state. The *haniwa*, or works of religious sculpture made of clay, which were commonly found during the period, embodied the basic subjects of myth, religion and ritual. The culture of the prewritten language period as represented in the *haniwa* together with the art and architectural styles of the 7th and 8th centuries came under the direct influence of foreign medieval culture, which alongside Buddhism began to be introduced into Japan. The meeting of two cultures which were at different stages resulted in Yamato being replaced by a transitional type of state, which cannot unconditionally be described as either early-feudal or slave-owning.

Neither Japanese, West European nor American historians have yet finally agreed upon a periodization of Japanese ancient and medieval history. For the sake of convenience the author of this chapter has decided to use the following scheme:

- (1) 5th-8th centuries—transition from the ancient to the early medieval period;
- (2) 9th-12th centuries—the early Middle Ages;
- (3) 12th-14th centuries—developed feudalism;
- (4) 14th-16th centuries—late Middle Ages, the transition to a modern period.

From ancient times to the Middle Ages.

5th-8th centuries. During this period the tribal society was at a stage of transition from an ethnic community to a territorial community, from a union of tribes to a nation. In Japanese historiography this system is called *uji-kabane*, which literally translated means "clan-title". (There were nine *kabane* in all.) The highest priestly functions under the common tribal King, Sumeragi (the high priest and supreme ruler) were concentrated in the hands of two powerful clans, the Nikatomi and the Imibe. The Otome, Mononobe and Soga clans provided military leaders, bodyguards and treasurers. The heads of the most influential clans had the rank of courtiers and provincial military governors.

The mass of the population were free commune members, who were mainly engaged in farming, hunting and fishing. They owned arable and other lands. But there were also what were called *tadokoro*, pastures and hunting lands which belonged to the clan nobility. The royal clan had many lands in different places, which were known as *minashiro*, *mi-koshiro*, *miegata* and *miyake* and which were mostly rice fields with barns. The royal lands were farmed not only by the commune members, but also by special *tabe* or fields workers. Slaves, known as *nuhi* and *yatsuko*, were an insignificant part of the population, being used only as servants and for heavy and unskilled labour.

A very important part in the life of Yamato was played by what were called *be*. The *be* were formed from various social and ethnic groups which included the free, the dependent, the semi-free, and slaves of Japanese, Chinese and Korean descent. Some came from foreign slaves who had been captured and given away or bought, others seem to have come from the local nobility (Imibe and Mononobe) and others still from free commune members, who had been made dependent after their clan had been defeated by another, more powerful clan.

In the 6th century a bitter struggle for power took place between the leaders of the Nakatomi and Mononobe clans on the one side and the Soga on the other. An important part in this struggle was played by Buddhism, which came to Japan around the late fourth and early fifth centuries, a time when Yamato was actively intervening in a war between the two Korean states of Pekche (which was supported by Japan) and Koguryō. By the 5th century the Japanese had taken the south of the Korean Peninsula and placed it under the control of the king of Yamato.

The Soga clan, who formed part of the king's closest entourage, were one of the first to accept Buddhism, finding in it support for their struggle for power. By the late 6th century the influence of Buddhism and the Soga clan was so great at court and among the nobility that the high Shinto priests and the nobility that supported them were ousted. In 593 Umayado, who is famed in Japanese history under the name Shotoku-Taishi, was made regent (*taishi*) with Soga support.

Shotoku-Taishi was a prominent political figure and reformer. Under his rule a number of Buddhist

temples were built and decorated with sculptures and paintings, and by the time of his death there were a total of 46 throughout Japan. According to the *Nihongi* (Historical Annals), in 603 he introduced a table of ranks. In 604 the Chinese calendar was introduced into Japan and in the same year the "Law of the 17 Articles", as it was called, was proclaimed. This was a highly prestigious collection of sermons compiled by scholars of the Chinese theological school. Like all compositions of this kind, the "Law of the 17 Articles" was extremely tendentious and apart from Buddhism revealed the strong influence of Confucianism and even Taoism. The moral and ethical homilies set out in the collection without any apparent system or order were by way of a recommendation to apply the norms of customary law such as existed at the time as a basis for legal proceedings. Consequently, when in the 8th, and particularly between the 10th and 13th centuries, laws were systematized and written down, the compilers of the various codes and philosophical and juridical treatises inevitably referred to the "Law of the 17 Articles". It was the desire of the author or authors of this memorable document to use the Buddhist faith to assert the power of the king and to use the Buddhist and Confucian principles of national statehood to undermine the clan system. This combined with the general orientation of the "Law" brought it closer to those subsequent reforms for which it had prepared the ideological groundwork. The main aim of Shōtoku-Taishi in drawing up the "Law of the 17 Articles" was to establish the monarchy of the king and weaken his main opponents, the clan nobility.

Shōtoku-Taishi's reign saw increased immigration of Korean and Chinese monks, preachers, scholars, artists, musicians and craftsmen. At his court chronicles began to be written in Chinese.

After his death in 621 or 622 the reforms which had been interrupted due to a revolt of the Soga faction were continued by Nakatomi Kamatari, who subsequently took the name of Fujiwara.

In 645 a land and population census was taken. In 646 a royal edict was announced on a reform which has gone down in history as the Taika, or Great Reform. The edict of 646 consisted of 4 articles. The first abolished slavery and the previous system of holding and inheriting property. The second announced a new system of administrative divi-

sions: the country was divided into provinces and districts with the Kinai district being proclaimed central and having its own governing bureaucrat. The third article announced the introduction of household lists for the purpose of redividing the land and fixing a tax of 22 rice sheafs from each *tyō* of land. This article introduced a new land measure, the *tan*, which was equal to 22,75 sq metres or 5 *bu* (1 *bu* = 4.55 sq m); 10 *tan* was equal to one *tyō*. Article four abolished all old taxes and duties and introduced a new taxation system after the Chinese model. The unified tax was levied in the form of silk thread and cotton wool (three metres of silk thread for each *tyō* of rice field). A household tax of one *jō* (three metres of cloth) was also introduced as well as an emergency tax in salt or other products to be paid to the king and a post tax—one horse from every hundred farms and one courier from every fifty.

In the 660s relations were established with China. **The *Taihōryō* or universal Code of Laws.** In 689 a new administrative code was published, which was a copy of the Tang legislation in China. In 702 work was completed on the compiling of a universal code of laws called the *Taihōryō* ("great treasure"), which subsequently throughout the whole of the medieval period in a slightly modified version served as the basis for feudal legislation.

The most important part of the code were the Land Law (Scroll IX), the Tax Law (Scroll X), the Bestowal Law (Scroll XV) and the Peasant Farmstead Laws (Scroll VIII). They contained an outline of the economic system on which the Japanese state was based.

Scrolls I-V dealt with the administrative structure and the social estates.

The social structure of society, according to the *Taihōryō* presented the following picture: (1) the hierarchy consisting of the bureaucracy and the priesthood; (2) the peasants known as the "good people" (*ryōmin*); and (3) the dependent slaves, known as the "base people", a disappearing category which dissolved among the peasants and the craftsmen. The main producers were the *ryōmin*. They paid taxes and tithes and performed various duties. *Ta-no-ryō*—the Land Law included in Scroll IX—was the legislative embodiment of the allotment system. Its articles reflected the land-tenure regulations of the period. These, according to the *Taihōryō*,

were a combination of a developing feudal system and the slave-owning system existing within it. This picture is fairly typical for the emerging early feudal state. The *Taihoryō* and other sources of the same period show that the main form of exploitation during the 7th and 8th centuries was feudal exploitation.

The land which was declared the property of the king consisted of arable lands with an irrigation system and virgin soil.

All land was subject to taxation which was levied according to area. Only the monasterial and virgin lands were exempt. The land tax amounted to approximately two measures from each *tan* and was levied irrespective of the quality of the soil and the size of the crop.

The whole country was divided into provinces—*kuni*—which were governed by the bureaucrats (*kokushi*) under the leadership of the governor (*kokushu*). A province was divided into districts. In the early 8th century there were 66 provinces and 592 districts.

In the capital and in the port of Naniwa (now Osaka) urban governing bodies were set up, while in the south (on the Island of Kyushu) and in the north-east there were two governors general.

The lower ranks of the administration consisted of a rural elder (*richō*), who headed a village of fifty households, a head-man in charge of five households (*gohochō*) and the head of a single household (*kosyu*). The village elder's duties also included policing the population.

Thus the feudal exploitation of the peasantry was based on state monopoly of the land. According to the *Taihoryō* the peasantry virtually lost their freedom being attached to the land through the harsh regulations governing their juridical and economic position. The free members of the commune lost the right to own arable land and other lands and had no instruments of production. Once entered into the land and tax registers they were forced to remain forever on the allotment on which they were registered. According to Scroll VIII the *richō* and the *gohochō* were made responsible for catching and returning fugitive peasants.

The *Taihoryō* also mentions what are called *jikifu*, or "attached households" which could be given for special services together with the peasants which lived on them as a hereditary gift. The decrees of 723 and 743 endorsed the personal ownership of va-

rious categories of land, which had virtually become feudal estates already. By the late 9th and early 10th centuries these estates which were called *shōen* became the predominant form of landownership, and the allotment system together with the state monopoly of land, which had almost virtually been abandoned, gave way to it. The destruction of the allotment system brought with it the impoverishment of the peasants, who no longer held land. From the late 7th century onwards there appear edicts mentioning the presence of innumerable bands of fugitive peasants wandering the country. The people experienced terrible suffering once they abandoned their land and various moratoria were announced with a view to curbing the depopulation of the allotment lands. But by the 8th century the various measures that were taken in this direction proved doomed to failure. The best lands had gone out of the control of the state forever. In place of legislative bans on the nobility and the monasteries preventing them from acquiring allotments for special services, there appear a number of decrees allowing them to own both previously opened up and newly ploughed virgin lands. According to the land registers in the first half of the 8th century the holdings of the monasteries and the nobility increased tenfold. The reduction in the size of the state domain and the ever increasing flood of state peasants going on to the *shōen*-type holdings deprived the allotment system of its reason to exist. It finally destroyed the communal system, but at the same time cleared the way for the development of feudalism and thus served as a bridge from the ancient world to the medieval.

The transition to developed feudalism was marked by the ever increasing influence of Buddhism. In compiling the *Taihoryō* it was the Buddhist monks who played the leading part. Since the time of the Taika reform Buddhism had been recognized as equal to the local religion, which during the Nara period began to be called Shinto, or "path of the gods". In the form in which the Shinto religion existed when Buddhism made its appearance it was nothing more than a tribal shamanist religion, which had not yet parted with its primitive myths.

The encounter with the Buddhist religion, with the strict hierarchy of its pantheon and its established theology, had a dual influence on Shintoism. On the one hand, the desire of the Buddhists to con-

solidate their position by assimilation resulted in the emergence of *ryōbushintō*, as it was called, or the teaching that the Shintoist divinities were incarnations of Buddha. In subsequent centuries *ryōbushintō* (lit. "the dual path of the gods") became very widespread. On the other, Shintoism was uniquely preserved. This was probably due to the fact that although this archaic mytho-religious cult had managed by the advent of Buddhism to reach a fairly high level of formalization, nevertheless Shintoism like the religions of all peoples having no written language was expressed only in rituals, in art and in architecture. In such an unchanged form Shintoism has existed for many centuries preserving its position both at court where the king (*tenno*) acted as high priest and among the common people. Furthermore, both levels coexisted satisfactorily with Buddhism. Thus, for example, the syncretic court ritual *Gagaku* contained the Shintoist *Kagura* mysteries and others that were purely Buddhist.

Shintoism could not oppose Buddhism and from the early 7th century the Shintoist priesthood sought support from the Buddhist Church.

Buddhist temples and monasteries became pockets of culture and Chinese learning. Annals and chronicles were written here and sutras were copied. From the 7th to the 9th centuries six Buddhist sects or religious schools appeared in Japan. These were the Jodoshu, the Sanronshu, the Hossoshu, the Kussashu, the Kegonshu and the Risshu. Their doctrines were united by common Mahayanist principles and their various teachings did not contradict one another.

The Nara and Heiyan periods. In the early 8th century a new capital, Nara, was built. This was the first town in Japan ever to have been built in precise conformity with the Chinese model of town building.

710, the year of the founding of Nara, was a landmark in Japanese medieval history for other reasons also. It began a comparatively short (till the end of the 8th century) period of interaction between Japanese early medieval culture and the cultures of the feudal states of China, Korea, and India, and of the peoples of South-East and Central Asia.

It was at this time that the great architectural monuments of Horyuji and Tadaiji were built and a number of magnificent Buddhist sculptures. The earliest of the written texts that have come down to

us—the *Nihongi*, the *Kojiki* and the *Fudoki* which include fragments of other texts that have not been preserved—also date from the beginning of the Nara period. The Nara period laid the groundwork for, and accelerated the synthesis of Japanese medieval culture that was subsequently to flower in the Heiyan period.

In 794 the capital was transferred from Nara to Heiyan. This event marked the appearance of a new social economic and political system. Power virtually passed into the hands of the Fujiwara clan, who in the process of eroding the allotment system had taken possession of enormous landed estates.

As a result of the peasants fleeing from the allotted state-owned lands, these became wastelands. They were then snapped up by members of the ruling estate who took advantage of the legislation which allowed them to dispose of the land if they cultivated it. The fugitive peasants were then induced to return and work the land for certain privileges. Thus the steady decline of state allotment farming resulted in the steady growth of the *shōen* system of private landed estates. The *shōen* (which were originally fiefs granted by the state to the military or civilian nobility) accounted by the early 9th century for nine-tenths of the arable land, which very soon became virtually independent feudal holdings. There were two other types of landownership: the *kubunden* and the *goshi*. The former were originally communal lands which had passed into the hereditary ownership of individual peasants. Two types of payments were exacted from these lands: a tax *sō* and corvée *eki*. The latter was like the allotment and exempt from taxation. The majority of the holders of this latter type lived in Kanto and belonged to the category *kenin* (soldier-colonists), who received lands in the regions they had conquered from their military commanders and were allowed to retain the revenues. It was from these *kenin*, who soon developed into hereditary soldiers, that the military estate of the Samurai developed. They were given grants of food and weapons. Part of the *kenin*, however, remained on the land and became like the peasants dependent on the *shōen* lords.

The Fujiwara clan ruled the country either as regents (*shōsho*) during the minority of the sovereign, or according themselves the title of chancellor (*kampaku*).

The Heiyan government and the court together

with its nominal ruler were totally dependent on the whims of the Fujiwara clan, who formally respected the prestige of the court.

During the 11th century, war was a permanent condition in Japan with the result that by the 12th century the fertile plains of Kanto had virtually become an independent province with its own military and fief-holding system. The lords in this region only gave nominal recognition of the Heiyan sovereignty. The country was in a state of ruin and here and there peasant revolts broke out.

But despite this, there was no break in the development of culture and a unique, multi-faceted art and literature flourished which was remarkable for the maturity and integrity of its masters.

The culture of the Heiyan period. The beautifully elegant aristocratic culture of the Heiyan period was probably one of the more important sources for the highly aesthetic elements in medieval and even modern Japanese culture, where Heiyan is considered the first stage in a culture that is consciously divorced from life. However, it is well known that during this period completely different phenomena appeared in both art and literature which most likely derived from the transformation which Buddhism had undergone as it took root in Japan. First of all, the changes could be seen in the type of schools and religious sects that predominated during the Heiyan period. In the early 9th century *Jodo*, the "pure earth" sect, *Ritsushu* and *Hosso* were replaced by *Tendaishu* and *Shingonshu*.

Buddhism in the 9th-12th centuries. Unlike the Japanese Buddhism of the 7th and 8th centuries, whose teaching was directed to protecting the interests of the state, both the new sects were intended to appeal to all who professed the Buddhist religion, i.e. the Buddhist Church was now relying on the support of its adepts to make a bid for political and, therefore, economic independence. But since between the 9th and 12th centuries Buddhism had spread primarily through the ruling classes, it tended to be somewhat elitist which made its clerical hierarchy into ordinary feudal lords. But at the same time the Buddhist teaching on the *karma* with its idea of requital and salvation was extremely important, for to a certain extent it leveled out the lower and the higher classes and eroded the latter's eliteness. This made way for the creation of numerous typically medieval works of literature,

which though varied in terms of their genre were, nevertheless, called by the same name in Japan, the *bukkyō bungaku*, or Buddhist oral literature. These were typical medieval collections of stories and legends, lives of the saints and parables, stories taken from everyday life with moralizing endings and various other works of a didactical and ethical nature. The very earliest of these are the *Nihon ryoiki* (late 8th-early 9th century), the *Konjaku monogatari shu* (13th century) and the *Kokachomonju* (13th century).

In all these works, which reached their zenith in the late Heiyan and early Kamakura period, the centre of the narrative is focused on moralizing. This is the distinctive feature of a literature in which a verbose, flowery text is carefully arranged to accord with the ethical norms of the teaching of *karma*.

Thus in medieval literature, the literature of the "new generation", the text is divorced from the myth turned not to an individual person but to a whole body of people (whose orientation in the world is determined by the entire text of the myth).

The element of the miraculous in myth and in Buddhist literature plays various roles. In the religious literature the miracle is an essential part; in myth it is either non-essential or simply traditional.

In Buddhist literature the theme is designed to emphasize the experiences of the individual cut off from his family unit, for whom the world (particularly its beginning, i.e. its cosmogony) is explained in myth. In the *bukkyō bungaku* it is understanding of the human soul that stands at the centre of the narrative. It is not gods, nor heroes, nor even deified ancestors, but simply man himself, whether good or bad, and his life on earth that is the focal point. The conventional, fragmentary description of the surrounding world provides for the most part nothing more than a theatrical backdrop. Descriptions of both one's deeds and real life are subordinated to a single aim—to show the power and irreversibility of *karma*. The loose social differentiation gives this genre a universal character, which helped Buddhism take root in Japanese popular culture.

The medieval romance. At this time a completely new type of writing appeared in Japan and rapidly gained ground. This came in the form of the medieval courteous romance, the diaries of aristocrats, essays and poetical anthologies, all of which

formed an independent feudal subculture which in a period of troubles and internal strife that ultimately reduced the Heian court to a state of poverty was called upon to compensate for the unenviable position and extremely poor opportunities for employing their creative talents that was the lot of a narrow circle of brilliantly educated courtiers, who sought in their art for a way out of their burdensome and monotonous life.

The medieval Japanese courteous romance may rightly be considered an outstanding achievement of world medieval culture. The *Genji monogatari* of Murasaki Shikibu, which appeared long before the chivalrous romance in the West, is quite astounding in the monumental scale of its description even in comparison with the mature West European chivalrous romance for all the latter's assimilation and reworking of the Hellenistic and Byzantine epic.

The Japanese early-medieval romance is a phenomenon of great interest in medieval culture in general. The struggle between the two principles in medieval art: the new (the personal) and the old (the epic) goes back to the heroic myths. It was a phenomenon that was inherent in medieval culture. The transition period from ancient times to the Middle Ages (and in Japan it took several centuries longer than, for example, in France) was inevitably accompanied by mobility and permeability in the partitions between the various kinds of art and literature. Evidently in the development of a new, in this case medieval culture, the canons of the previous period continue to exercise even in their weakened form a powerful influence over the formation of ideas, genres, tastes, etc., a fact which is reflected in the appearance of one or other art form. Thus French and West European culture generally began with the heroic epic poems while the chivalrous romance there came later, only in the 12th century which was notable for a general upsurge of medieval culture. In Japan this kind of literature, which came first in the form of a huge lyrical epic work appeared almost a century earlier.

Despite the typological similarity of their genres, the worlds of the Japanese and French romance are quite different. The West European and French medieval romance of the 12th-13th centuries covered its path departing from the chivalrous heroic epic, which preceded it and which was largely mythologi-

cal, towards the lyrical adventure narrative. The chivalrous romance appeared in Europe at a time when trade was expanding, towns were being built, the Crusades were taking place and lands overseas were being colonized. Old ideas were coming up against new impressions and information, and this was being reflected in the romance, albeit often in a highly distorted and whimsical form. But for all this wealth of impressions and variety which the new world presented, it was not they that lay at the centre of the romance, but man (usually the knight and his lady), and his intimate life with all its ups and downs. Everyday life in such romances might be excessively generalized or just weakly described, since it was intended only to provide a background or a kind of conventional landscape. But it was no longer a timeless mythological background, but a fairy-tale world full of legends and marvellous happenings.

The Japanese romance is quite different. In 894 a Japanese embassy set out for the last time for Chan-nan. In subsequent years relations between the two countries ceased. The Heian court became divorced from the outside world. Furthermore, even within its own country the process of feudalization had resulted in the court's isolation since it resided in Japan's only large town. Thus aristocratic culture became totally exclusive.

Conceived in the world of the magical fairy-tale, whence the *monogatari* (lit. narrative) derived its original structure, the Japanese romance had by the 10th century already parted with its style. Both the 10th century Japanese romances *Ochikubo monogatari* and *Utsubo monogatari*, in which a fairy-tale prologue is followed by a real-life narrative, were of this kind. The *Genji monogatari* and the *Pillow Books* by another Japanese lady writer, Sei Shōnagon, present the reader with finished, meticulously polished works that are fully appropriate to this literary genre.

In the *Genji* the inner psychological world is at times even more fully revealed than in the European chivalrous romance. But unlike the West, where both the writer and the reader are satiated with a kaleidoscope of the most varied details from real life and the heroes are placed in an abstract, purified fairy-tale world, both the Japanese writers describe the life of their heroes in the most painstaking detail, thereby giving us the aroma of life as it

was really lived in the capital and the provinces of medieval Japan. An interest that thirsts for everything that comprises the "beauty and burden" of man's everyday existence anticipates that important principle of charm in Japanese art and literature that was formed much later.

The unique psychological naturalism of the early-medieval romance is found several centuries later in such authors as Ihara Saikaku, the unsurpassed classical Japanese writer of the late feudal period.

Unlike the French romance, tension in the Japanese romance is achieved exclusively through the narrating of real events in lives of the heroes. The miraculous plays almost no part at all in the development of the story. The heroes are doomed by their own *karma* from which no miracle or supernatural force can save them. The fatalism of the *Genji* reflects the decline of the Heiyan court and the fall of the old aristocracy that was sliding ever nearer to its destruction. And it is the life of this effete and exclusive group that has been so penetratingly and subtly, yet elegantly and ornately traced by two of its most outstanding female representatives.

Both Murasaki Shikibu and Sei Shōnagon had many followers, particularly the unusually popular medieval writer, Tsurayuki, who wrote under the pseudonym of a woman. The tradition of Japanese female literature is a unique phenomenon in medieval culture, and both of the Japanese women writers ought rightly to have an honourable place in the history of world literature.

It is interesting that their works seem to symbolize the change when the old aristocracy relinquished its place under pressure from the new military-feudal stratum.

The feudal hierarchy. With the coming to power of the military-feudal nobility who relied on the lower and middle Samurai that were mainly concentrated in Kanto, Japanese feudalism acquired a form that was similar to European feudalism.

By the late 11th century there were two types of *shōko* lords—the *daimyō*, or large-scale landowners, and the *shōmyō*, or medium-scale landowners. The most powerful among the *daimyō*, known as the *shugo*, held the highest civil and military ranks. The next grade in the hierarchy belonged to the *ichizoku daimyō*, who were mostly vassals of the *shugo*. After these came the Samurai, who were either vassals of

the *shugo* or the *ichizoku*. With the exception of the *karō*, or leaders of the Samurai, who could have fief holdings since they were the administrative authorities of the clan, the rest of the Samurai, both officers and men, received payment in kind instead of land.

This hierarchy lasted more or less till the end of the medieval period.

The attempts of the Fujiwara clan to cope with the insubordinate provincial nobility by setting over them the heads of the two most powerful feudal clans, the Taira (Heikyo) and the Minamoto (Genji) resulted in the Fujiwara losing power completely and in the beginning of a bitter struggle for power between these clans. At its zenith the feudal system to a large extent developed and strengthened through such feudal strife. It was a survival of the fittest based on free competition which brought to the forefront the powerful feudal houses. These subjugated the weaker and eventually became strong enough to lay claim to the role of unifiers of the country.

The Minamoto clan held almost the whole of Eastern Japan (Kanto), which virtually became an independent martial principality.

The Taira clan which ruled in eight of the Kanto provinces with its residence in Sojima (Shimosa) had by the mid-10th century seceded from the central government. But after a number of unsuccessful plots which resulted in the defeat and death of the head of the clan, Taira Masakado, they were forced to surrender all their possessions in Kanto in exchange for lands in the western provinces.

In the 12th century the military-feudal nobility formed two alliances: one headed by the Taira, the other by the Minamoto.

Until 1181 (the year of the death of Taira Kiyōmori) Japan was ruled by the Taira, who changed at will the nominal rulers in Heiyan. After the death of Taira Kiyōmori the Minamoto took the capital in 1183 and put Gō-Toba on the throne, by whom they were given the title Seiitai Shōgun (lit. "war-leader—conqueror of the barbarians", a title that had once been established for victory over the Ainu but which henceforth right up to modern times became hereditary).

The first shogunate. In 1185, in what was for the times a colossal naval battle at Danho-ura (near present-day Shimonoseki), a battle which has been frequently glorified in medieval and modern Japa-

nese literature, the Taira were utterly defeated. The leaders were taken and beheaded and the heads were displayed on the square outside the palace. All those that had sided with them were hunted down. From that time on until 1868 the Japanese government was headed by a shogun.

The first stage of this period which lasted till the mid-14th century is known as the Kamakura Shogunate, since the latter, which was in fact the first shogunate, was coterminous with the period. The first Kamakura shogun was Minamoto Yoritomo (1147-1199). A careful politician and diplomat, he observed the proper attitude both towards the Heiyan court and the Buddhist Church. He extended his patronage to the temples and the monasteries, which belonged to all sects of the Buddhist faith without exception. Kanto was his special concern, and new irrigation works, ship-canal, dams and villages had been built there. The coastal lands and swamps were turned into rice-fields.

In a bid to subdue the western provinces he garrisoned regular troops there and sent special civil servants to levy taxes for their upkeep. Having received in 1186 the title of *sotsuho*, he placed under his command all military fief holders. In addition, he gave himself the right to appoint former military officers (*shugo*) to supervise the higher civilian authorities and to inspect the petty landowners (*shōmyō*).

Thus all military and administrative power was concentrated in the hands of the shogun. Having become the most powerful and virtually the sole ruler in the country, Yoritomo still continued according to historical traditions to lead his former strict way of life as a Kamakura warrior. It is this way in which he is portrayed in a posthumous painting ascribed to Fujiwara Takanobu which to this day is a sacred relic of the Jingoji Temple.

After Yoritomo's death power passed to the Hojō regency. The Hojō was a *daimyo* clan from the Island of Izu. The first regent under Shogun Yoriyo was his grandfather, Hojō Tokimasa, who in 1202 received the title of Seiitai Shōgun, and the title of regent (*shikken*) became hereditary in the Hojō clan.

The Minamoto dynasty came to an end when the last shogun of the Minamoto clan, the grandson of Yoritomo, was killed as a result of a plot by his own soldiers in 1219.

The struggle for power between the feudal groupings. The Shikken Hojō tried to hold on to power through various manoeuvres and intrigues, but they were opposed by a coalition which came to be called the three Hoo's. These were Buddhist monks, who in the lay world had been rulers and who, according to a tradition that had been formed in the Heiyan period, had given up the throne in favour of the juvenile heir and ruled as regents thereby realizing their claims for power in the Buddhist Church.

In the late 1190s a feudal war broke out between the Kamakura and the coalition headed by the three abdicated rulers. It was a war in which many members of the nobility took part. In 1220 Shikken Hojō Yoshitoki smashed the coalition and captured its leaders. All those who had sided with the Hoo were deprived of their possessions. In 1222 more than three thousand estates that had been seized from the opposing nobility were given out to the Hojō's supporters. The clan aristocracy finally lost its former position and the power of the Hojō, now strengthened, lasted for over another century.

In the 13th century the political system in Japan presented a highly motley picture. In Kyoto the Tenno court still existed, but purely for political decoration and possessed of no functions whatever. Furthermore, in conformity with a special decree the throne was occupied in turn for a period of no more than ten years by a representative of the older or younger branches of the dynasty. The ruler could choose a wife only from the Fujiwara clan. The Kamakura throne had no real power either. Shoguns were put on the throne while still children and then made to abdicate at the age of twenty. Although for all practical purposes the *shikken* (always a member of the Hojō clan) was the head of state, he more often than not possessed only nominal power, which was also invested in him while still a child. In his stead the reins of government were either taken by the *kanryō*, who held the power as prime-minister, or by his own father.

Thus in a form that was made extremely complex by the many and varied gradations of tradition, which frequently only preserved their outward semblances, the struggle for power went on between the different feudal factions and the Buddhist Church which was often extremely active and aggressive in this struggle.

The feudal code Jōei Shikimoku. In 1232 a feudal code entitled the *Jōei shikimoku*, which had been drawn up to regulate all aspects of life in Japan, came into force. Since the time of the *Taihōryō* medieval law had undergone a number of highly important changes. The *Shikimoku* which consisted originally of 50 articles was frequently supplemented until 1270 and received such wide recognition that a new edition was published in 1534 with detailed commentaries. It remained a classical text for the training of young noblemen for a career in the administration right up until the publication of the Tokugawa Legislation.

Like other feudal codes, the *Jōei shikimoku* established customary law. In the West European feudal codes as far as they concerned Roman law the ancient customary law had undergone a harsh process of selection and been reduced to a great degree of formalization. Similarly, the Japanese feudal code used often arbitrarily the terminology of the *Taihōryō*, in which old Japanese customary law combined freely and at times contradictorily with Chinese law.

According to the code, administrative and legislative power belonged to the *bakufu* (lit. "council of the tent") which was comprised only of members of the military social estate.

The *bakufu* consisted of four "Great Councils": the *Mandokoro*, which looked after internal and external affairs; the *Monchushō*, which was a legislative body; the *Samuraidokoro*, a kind of ministry of defence; and the *Jishadokoro*, a department which looked after religious affairs (Buddhist and Shintoist).

But the power of the *bakufu* (both administrative and legislative) over the lay feudal landowners and over the priesthood (in the person of the Buddhist Church) was purely nominal.

The internal struggle for ideological and political predominance. Buddhism. The power of the Buddhist Church during this period had increased immeasurably. And its influence now affected the lives of all social estates in Japanese society.

Since during this period urban development had not yet reached the level for towns and cities to exercise self-government, or even more, claim the status of free towns, while all large towns like Kyoto, Nara, Kamakura and Naniwa (Osaka) depended directly on the *bakufu*, they naturally took no part in

the political struggle. Thus the struggle for power took place so far within the feudal social estate. And the Buddhist Church took part in that struggle as a serious contender for the role of spiritual leader and teacher of the whole Japanese people. For this purpose it strengthened its influence among the broadest sections of the people, and adapted the Buddhist faith to the requirements of all social estates of Japanese society.

But the struggle for ideological and political domination was not only taking place between the secular and the clerical powers. It was also going on within the Buddhist Church itself, between the rival Buddhist sects and schools. The growth of the church lands stimulated the development of theocratic ideas and tendencies. At the same time a kind of secularization process was taking place which was accompanied by and attended the revitalizing of the old schools, sects and orders and the appearance of several new ones.

The strongest competitors in this struggle during the 12th and 13th centuries were the Jōdo and Nichiren sects, as these orders are customarily called. The Jōdo sect began in the time of the Nara; during the Heiyan period its credo was outlined in a theological treatise entitled *Ojo yoshu*, the authorship of which is ascribed to the Buddhist patriarch, Genshin (985). The nucleus of the Jōdo doctrine was the thesis of salvation for the faithful who after death were to be reborn in the Western Paradise solely through the grace of the Buddha (Amida), Lord of the Pure Land. According to the teaching of the Jōdo patriarchs, Amida had to be prayed to continually with the words: *Senshu nembutsu* ("the only desire—to think of the Buddha"). In the 12th and 13th centuries the Jōdo teaching was enlarged and followers were sought among all social estates and ranks of rich and poor alike, but particularly among the Samurai, who at the time had become the most active and serious force in the political struggle.

The preaching of Jōdo reached its height during the time of its second high priest, Shinran (1173-1262), who was active not only among the mass of the Samurai, but directly among the peasants. Henceforth Buddhism became a mass religion. This in turn gave impetus to a process that had already begun during the late Nara-early Heiyan period whereby Buddhism and Shintoism were becoming closer. The new faith, known as *ryōbushintō* (lit. "the

dual path of the gods”), was based on a treatise that was advanced in the 8th century and known as *Honji suijaku* which meant “the Shintoist gods are the hypostases of the Buddha on Japanese soil”.

Equally as popular as the Jōdo sect was the Hokkeshu, which was founded by one of the most famous priests in the history of Japanese Buddhism, Nichiren (1222-1282), after whose name the doctrine was also known as *Nichirensu*. Nichiren claimed that the key to salvation for all was the *Hokkekyō* Sutra, i. e. the Lotus Sutra, having announced his prayer: *Namumyohō rengekyō* (“Hail to the Lotus Sutra”). Unlike orthodox Amidism, which promised requital for all in a future life, Nichiren’s teaching gave considerable concern for matters that were of a purely earthly nature, and this was evidently the root of his popularity. The *Life of St. Nichiren* tells that among his many acts for which he was persecuted by the authorities his treatise *Risshi-Ankoku ron* (On Establishing a Correct Social System and Achieving Peace in the State), which he gave to the regent and which contained bitter attacks on the existing system and on corruption, resulted in his immediate exile. On returning from this exile he again brought down the wrath of the government and in 1271 was threatened with death, but this was subsequently commuted to exile on the far-off island of Sado.

It was in Nichiren’s teaching that the thesis was first put forward of the direct mystical connection of the *Saddharma pundarika sutra* with the soil of Japan. And later in the 20th century this was understood by the advocates of Japanese nationalism as the exclusive nature of Japan and Japanese Buddhism. They tried to make use of Nichiren’s teaching for their own propaganda by claiming that their ideas on the exclusiveness of Japan derived from Shōtoku Taishi, the apostle of Japanese Buddhism who taught that the roots of the sun lay in Japanese soil. Hence the idea that the Japanese people were destined to lead all the peoples of the Far East.

Nichiren’s teaching may to some extent be likened to Lutheranism. It contained the same passionate preaching that all were equal, it exposed injustice on earth and it insisted upon commitment to the culture of one’s land and the language of its people. In this context Nichiren’s teaching was a great step towards the synthesis of reformed Buddhism and Shintoism.

Ryōbu, which was a unique synthesis of religious faiths at various stages of their development, a synthesis that was completed through assimilation of the Shintoist pantheon with the functions of the Shintoist gods being transferred to the Buddhist divinities, gave rise to the development of early medieval iconography. This included alongside the traditional personages of Mahayana Buddhism others that were purely Shintoist and that derived from the Nara period and even earlier times. The magnificent sculpture of the Shintoist god of war, Hachiman, is a remarkable example of the renaissance of the ancient, pre-Buddhist iconographic tradition which took place at a completely different stage of development. In fact, however, the work is quite typical of the period, which had experienced a hitherto unknown diffusion of every kind of the Mahayana teaching in the very midst of the Japanese people in which pre-Buddhist traditions had never completely disappeared. The interaction between the Mahayana and Shintoism was made easier by the close similarity of the major ideas of these religious teachings finding themselves at different stages of development. The Mahayana, as is well known, was formed through interaction between many of the Central Asiatic cults and beliefs which themselves were all at different stages of development. Hence the great openness of the Mahayana in comparison with Hinayana, which made the former into a kind of mytho-religious syncretic system.

Without going into the details of the Mahayanist and Shintoist beliefs, it is nevertheless essential to consider one particular aspect—their concepts of space which in many respects determined the character of their cultures. Like almost all the ancient religions of Central Asia and the Far East, the Mahayana believed in the sacredness of the cosmos, both as a whole and in its individual parts. This also corresponded to Shintoism where the spatial concepts of the myth are maintained in almost complete inviolability.

Zen Buddhism. This correspondence appeared particularly clearly in the way in which the cultural phenomenon known as Zen Buddhism spread and developed organically in Japan.

For all the great variety that exists in evaluations and descriptions of Zen, it must still be treated as a unique phenomenon. Evidently, the serious difficulties that arise in describing and analysing the phe-

nomenon are due to a large extent to adopting too local an approach and underestimating its stadial character even though adjustments may be made for the differences in its rate of development not only in different regions, but in different areas of culture as well. In the form in which it developed in Japan after it was adopted there—that is, considered inseparable from the culture which it gave rise to and which is usually referred to in literature as “Zen-culture”—Zen is an example of one of the fullest and most varied phenomena to exist in late medieval culture.

It is a well-known fact that in many parts of the world, particularly in Europe, the end of the Middle Ages was marked by the appearance of new trends in the different cultural spheres which were cloaked in the garb of religious and mystical persuasions and schools, which either arose on their native soil or were adopted from other countries and which spread among all estates of medieval society.

Zen was one of these trends.

It is also a well-known fact that throughout the whole of ancient and medieval history human thinking, which was first embodied in myth and then in religion, had continually tried to find an answer to the most important question, that of *raison d'être*. In the transition periods of feudalism the need to provide such an answer became more acute. In an attempt to personally influence his destiny man has resorted to one of two fundamental ideas which in various periods and in various forms have been embodied either in the myth of his becoming a god, or in the myth of his opposition to the gods. Thus at the centre of the myths or the religious teachings there stands either god or man. Thus the ideas move from the man-god of the heroic myths to the god-man of the world's three great religions. As a rule the crises of the transition period are marked by increased opposition, by the desire to bring heaven down to earth rather than to reach out for the heavens, and this is shown, in particular, by the mystical teachings of the late Middle Ages.

The teaching of Zen (the Chinese Chan) came to Japan in the 8th century. But the problems which then faced the young Japanese state forced the Buddhist adherents to prefer other, less speculative doctrines of the Mahayana. It was not until the 13th century that Zen began to come into its own. Its teaching had by that time undergone numerous

changes from an early medieval mystical faith proclaiming the “enlightenment” (*satori*), a faith whose followers at the first stage of the history of Dhyana (meditation) were active iconoclasts (they burned holy scrolls and smashed sculptural icons), to a full-fledged religion that had created in Sung China sacred texts and various representations that were intended to serve the greater glory and power of the faith. And if during the Nara period the magnificent and complicated rituals of the Shingon (another mystical school, which like Zen taught that the path to salvation lay in contemplation leading to enlightenment) were highly attractive for the Buddhist nobility, a change had occurred in the Kamakura period.

The restoration of the Kemmu. The historical events of the late 12th and 13th centuries are highly appropriate to the name which this period has been given—The End of the Laws. The fall of the Kamakura rulers, the Hojō regents, was marked by unrest and internecine strife, on the crest of which there rose to power a comparatively small but influential group of powerful feudal lords. These were the *daimyō* who were mainly from the region of Kansai, the traditional cradle of the Japanese state with its capital cities of Nara and Heiyan and the ancient port of Naniwa (Osaka). The distance which separated Kansai from Kamakura had protected the Kansai *daimyō* there from the watchful eye of the *bakufu*. Also the traditional legitimism, which was an invariable characteristic in Japanese political history, played a not inconsiderable role. The struggle waged by the big feudal landowners of the west to overthrow the power of the Hojō took place under the pretext of restoring the legitimate power of the ruler, whose throne by general consensus stood firmly in Kyoto. A coalition was formed between the *daimyō* and the *kuge* of Kansai and against the *bakufu*'s puppet, Kogen-Tenno; they set up their own claimant, Gōdaigō, who after the coalition's victory over Kamakura in 1333 ascended the throne. The Kamakura shogunate ceased to exist. This event has gone down in history under the name “The Restoration of the Kemmu” (or “the establishment of military power”). This brought to power the *kobugattai*, a coalition of the old aristocracy and the big feudal landowners.

The second shogunate. But in the following year after their victory the new regime came under

attack from the feudal lords of Kanto, headed by the powerful *daimyō*, Ashikaga Takauji, who had first betrayed the Kamakura regent and then gone against those who until only recently had been his allies. In 1336 he besieged and took Kyoto, overthrew Gōdaigō and put his own henchman on the throne. He then proclaimed that power was to be restored to the *bakufu* and made himself shogun.

Thus the second shogunate appeared on the historical scene. It is known as the Shogunate of Ashikaga or Muromachi (from the town in which the shogun had his headquarters). But the wars of the Nambokuchō (lit. "the south and north courts") did not end here and continued between the two feudal coalitions almost till the end of the 14th century.

The deposed ruler, Gōdaigō, fled from Kyoto in the same year, 1336, to Yoshino and led there a coalition of Ashikaga's opponents. They then proclaimed the court at Yoshino as the only legitimate one. This typically medieval conflict continued with varying success until 1392 when Gōdaigō's heir at Yoshino handed over the royal regalia to the Northern court after which the northern branch of the dynasty in Kyoto was again recognized by the whole of Japan.

Traditional Japanese historiography has aptly named the period of the Nambokuchō and the subsequent years to the time of Momoyama jidai (i. e. from the early 14th to the late 16th century) as the *gunyu kakkyo* (lit. "in every district its own hero") and the *gekokujo* (lit. "the lower orders overthrowing the upper orders").

The continuous war between the North and the South and the numerous feudal wars and popular uprisings that followed it and lasted without interruption to the end of the 16th century, virtually reduced the power of the shogun to the level of an ordinary feudal lord. The *bakufu* only had real control within the region of the capital, and though it took part in the various coalitions it continually needed the support of the powerful *daimyō*.

The *shōen* system finally ceased to exist. The long established feudal fragmentation resulted in the uneven development of the different regions of Japan. In some of the larger principalities in the south and the centre of the country, which had grown strong in the feudal wars, the smaller holdings had fallen into dependence on the more powerful *daimyō*. Here

trade and crafts developed, while towns and villages sprang up around the castles and rich monasteries. Merchant corporations—*kogyonin*—were formed in the towns as well as craftsmen's guilds (*deza*).

The growth of the towns. In the late 14th century towns began to spring up rapidly. Apart from those that developed around the temples (*monzenmachi*), and around the castles (*jokamachi*), there were also ports (*minatomachi*) and settlements on the postal routes (*shukubamachi*).

By the late 16th century there were 45 *monzenmachi*, 55 *shukubamachi*, 46 *minatomachi* and some 70 *jokamachi*. Approximately half of these are considered by Japanese historians to be major towns. The criterion for considering whether a town was to be described as small, medium or large was the size of its income, since there were no regular censuses which were first taken in the 17th century.

In the 15th century there were towns with populations of 25,000-30,000. The population of Kyoto in the 16th century reached 100,000. Obviously as well as craftsmen and traders the towns were inhabited by Samurai, Buddhist monks and peasants. This highly intensive urban development, which resulted in 10 per cent of the country's population dwelling in towns by the second half of the 16th century, demonstrates the rapid growth of money-commodity relations. The process of stratification increased among the traders and merchants. The third social estate, which had previously been without rights, were now granted them, and among the representatives of money-commodity capital some managed to earn what by contemporary standards were considered vast fortunes. These concentrated in their hands not only foreign and internal trade, but also the production of the most varied kinds of goods. Thus the third estate began to play an important role in the economic and political life of the country. In the 16th century a merchant from Fukuoka, Kamigaya Sojin, had control of silver mining in the province of Iwai and the production of dyes and valuable cloths. He was rich enough to finance the building of a castle in Kuroda and the military headquarters of Hijoshi Toyotomi in Nagoya. At the same time he controlled trade with China, Korea, Thailand and Luzon. A certain Shimai Soshitsu, a guild merchant from the Island of Kyushu, was the chief creditor of all the princes on

Kyushu. He financed the Hijoshi campaign to China and Korea and, like Kamigaya, had his own trading offices in China, Korea, Thailand and on the Island of Luzon.

The growing role of the third social estate is attested to by the appearance of self-governing towns. In the 14th century these were already on the increase. The townsmen steadily by all sorts of different means won one privilege after another from the feudal lords. The town of Sakai, which in the late 14th century received from its lord, *daimyō* Ouchi, the right to free trade with China and Korea, had by the 15th century become an important centre not only for foreign and internal trade, but also for craft manufacture. In the early 16th century its revenue was so high that it was able to buy its independence from its *daimyō* and become a completely free city, one of the few in Asia, which Europeans compared with Venice. The next free city of importance was Hakata and later Hirano. Naniwa, Hyogo and others also enjoyed considerable rights.

General trends in the development of Japanese culture from the 13th through the 16th century. The teaching of Zen, which was addressed to people of all social estates, found great response among the townsmen (particularly among members of the third estate and the Samurai), who on the one hand were undoubtedly impressed by the ideas of equality, and, on the other, attracted by the unassuming, worldly character of the religion and by its demonstrative simplicity and modesty, which were close to the Shintoist culture of the ordinary people. Particularly popular was the tea ceremony, whose ritual fully accorded with the tastes that had been inculcated by Shintoist tradition.

Zen spread throughout all levels of Japanese society and thus functioned as the unique bearer of new trends.

Obviously the concept of the Renaissance in the sense we are accustomed to give it is not applicable to Japanese history as also to the majority of countries in Asia. But the historical process during the transition period in many countries, for all the dissimilarity in their cultures, demonstrates their typological similarity at this stage of their development, and this allows us to combine them terminologically, despite the evident inadequacy of the terms used. Thus, for example, the question of the role of man and his place in the world and society acquired

in Japan as it did in the European Renaissance considerable importance in the period of transition from the Middle Ages to the modern times. Nevertheless, Italian humanism and, under its influence, European humanism of the 15th and 16th centuries like the European Renaissance in general was a unique phenomenon. In Japan, as in the majority of Oriental countries, there were no preconditions for the emergence of such a radical ideology—the ideology of man opposing the medieval canons. Even in modern times the medieval canon had lost none of its significance in Japan, and right up to the revolution of 1868 it exercised enormous influence on the character of the country's culture. Throughout the whole of the Middle Ages and at least during the first part of the modern times (the 17th century) the cultural traditions of Japan remained largely unchanged. Here is the root difference between the Italian Renaissance of the 15th and 16th centuries and the same period in Japan (as indeed in the whole of the Orient, where the transition to modern times was eroded, elusive and in places stretched out over centuries). Nevertheless, by the late 14th-early 15th centuries changes were taking place in Japanese culture which with a number of provisos can be compared with the European Renaissance.

A powerful peasant movement, frequently led by Buddhist monks and priests, the unification of the insurgent peasants and townfolk and the reformatory character of the teachings of Jōdo Shinshu and Zen are the indisputable witnesses to a deep crisis which had engulfed the whole of society, to the approach of new times which were reflected in both literature and art, but which, nevertheless, never went beyond the framework of Buddhism.

Literature, historical works, *Gunki*. Each stage in the history of Japanese antiquity and the Middle Ages was reflected not only in the representational arts and architecture, but also in the written word. Thus the transition from antiquity to the early medieval period was marked by three remarkable works—the *Nihongi*, the *Kojiki* and the *Fudoki*. One of these, the *Kojiki*, absorbed the whole Shintoist oral mythological tradition (both cosmogonic and heroic myths) which it interpreted in a completely Buddhist spirit. On the one hand, the *Kojiki* sums up, as it were, the preceding epoch, on the other, it takes the reader into a world of ideas that

were intended to serve directly the interests of strengthening the Nara state and attest to the divine power of the sovereign.

The famous novel, *Genji*, is the final chord of Heian culture, but it not only sums up the Heian period, it witnesses the collapse of the first centralized state in Japanese history and the collapse of the power of the clan aristocracy, which wanted to combine its ancient traditions with the principles of the Chinese feudal state. These same feelings are also found in another famous work of the early medieval period, the *Gukanshō* (1220). The author of this unique historical treatise is believed to be the Buddhist monk, Jien, who came from the Fujiwara clan. By the time the treatise was written the former greatness of the Fujiwara had long passed. The military estate—the *buke*—had come to power. Reflecting on the causes of the fall of his clan and the power of the *kuge*, the writer sees them to lie in the arbitrariness of the two powerful Shinto gods, Kasuga Daimyōjin and Hachiman Daibosatsu, the protectors of warriors, whose will the writer believes is embodied in the mystical law (*dori*) which controls the movement of destiny. The identification of the warriors' divinities of Shintoism with the great Bodhisattva is a typical example of *ryobushintō*.

The early 13th century saw the appearance of the *gunki* (or *senki*), a feudal epic similar to the French *Chanson de Roland* or the Spanish *Poema del Cid*. They were composed and performed by wandering bards, known as *biwa boshi* (lit. "monks with lutes") or blind story-tellers from the common people. The numerous versions of the *gunki* (*Heike monogatari*) that have been preserved relate the dramatic events of the struggle for power between the two feudal clans of Taira and Minamoto. The hero of the *gunki* is the typical medieval knight whose deeds served as a source of inspiration for the story-tellers. The *gunki* were highly popular with all sections of society.

But apart from the features of folk art, the *gunki* had fairly strong bookish, literary elements, for among their composers, or simply their performers and collectors, there were many educated Buddhist monks who supplemented the texts with moods and tones that echoed the typically early medieval religious "philosophy of history" found in the *Gukanshō* or the *Chanson de Roland*. In the same way as the *Heike monogatari* is full of the pessimism and doom that accompanies the story of the fall of the House of

Taira, the bitter fate of the doomed hero in the *Chanson de Roland* is also connected with the general decline of Carolingian culture that followed the bright, but short-lived flowering of the Carolingian Renaissance. To the mood of the *Chanson de Roland* can be added the distinctive epigraph of the *Heike* taken from the Buddhist chorale: "...the beauty of flowers ... just reveals the law—what lives will perish ... and in the end the powerful will perish." The upsurge and optimism of the *Poema del Cid* is rooted in the successes of the Reconquista. Thus outstripping the development of a similar genre in other countries or lagging behind it, medieval art and literature had always keenly reflected the moods and sentiments of the time. And in this respect it is significant how the genre of the *gunki* was transformed in the 14th century as it related the recent fall of the second Kamakura shogunate, the war between the North and the South, the fall of the Southern Court and the tragic fate of the main hero, Gōdaigō. The very name of the 14th century work, *Taiheiki* ("Description of the Great World") sounds unquestionably broader and more abstract than the concrete title *Heike monogatari* ("The Story of Taira and Minamoto").

Taking together with its subject certain external attributes of the *gunki* genre, the *Taiheiki* internally parts company with the direct oral tradition of early medieval story telling about the deeds of knights and rather accepts the view on the causes of the fall of the old aristocracy as it is set out in the *Gukanshō*. The *Taiheiki* is a professionally polished work of literature which follows the fixed techniques of Sinicized literary traditions. It ornately combines Buddhist historical and philosophical reflections on the "cause and effect" with the thrilling description of heroic adventures found in the *gunki*. In this respect it resembles the West European medieval romance, containing elements that were hitherto not found in the Heian romance or in the strict narrative of the *gunki*, where the purpose of all heroic deeds was to show the triumph of the *karma*.

New literary genres. The *Taiheiki* began a completely new direction in Japanese literature, which moved increasingly further away from the purely Buddhist interpretation of the events of history and everyday life. From the mid-15th century, when a distinctive type of romance like that of the *Twelve Songs of Joruri* first appeared, a type that became

exceptionally popular in the 16th and subsequent centuries, a new literary genre can be considered to have been formed. This was a genre that had finally parted company with the heroism of the traditional *gunki*. The historical heroes of the *Heike* had become the literary personages of a narrative which was intended purely for entertainment and which had quite different accents and colouring. The medieval genre had outlived itself, but at the same time it had become the basis on which the literary genres of modern times would develop (like the plays of the Kabuki theatre, adventure stories, etc.). At the same time there also appeared a typical medieval farce, the *kyogen*. The appearance of this genre attests to an ever increasing interest in the life and possibilities of the common man.

The authority of the Church, however, was in no way shaken. On the contrary, its claims increased. Even extreme theocratic ideas began to make their appearance. The ever increasing instability felt by all strata of society to some extent drove the people to find a reliable refuge from the tribulations of life. The teaching of Zen seemed the most acceptable and accessible means for each person who recognized the imperfection of the world around him and seeks liberation from oppression and disorder. The fairly strong tendencies to secularization and especially the distinctive anti-hierarchical ideas, ideas that the cosmos was the body of Buddha but that at the same time it could be represented by a single man, that enlightenment (*satori*) could be achieved by concentration of the human will or by the achievement of perfection in any sphere of human activity, immeasurably strengthened ideas on the value of man.

The Kamakura portrait. The appearance on the proscenium of history of the two main heroes of the period—the soldier and the monk—is reflected both in hagiography and in portraiture. The Kamakura portrait is an outstanding phenomenon of world medieval culture. Turning to the traditions of 8th-century portraiture, the Kamakura masters actually introduced completely new ideas into the ancient style. They were trying as fully as possible to embody contemporary ideas on the ideal hero and they therefore paid great attention to transmitting the specific individual features of the person whose portrait they were painting. Unlike the hieratic sculptural portraits of the Nara period, which could

only depict the ascetics of the Buddhist Church, the scope of the Kamakura portrait was much wider. Portraits could be painted as well as sculpted, and alongside portraits of the Zen monks and priests a large number of ceremonial portraits of the famous military commanders (both sculpted and painted) were executed and placed in the Zen temples as their objects of worship.

The Zen Kamakura portrait is the height of portraiture in the history of Japanese culture. No deeper interest in character or more concentrated display of attention is known in any other country during the Middle Ages. At a time when naturalism in Western Europe had hardly gone beyond the stage of depicting abstract human types and passions, the Kamakura portrait achieved unequalled depth of psychological insight, subtlety and penetration. In the 13th century (the zenith of Kamakura) portraiture occupied a central place in the synthesis of Zen culture, heralding the basic ideas of Zen teaching.

The Nō theatre. The culture of the Ashikaga period—the last period of the Middle Ages in Japan—reached its height in Nogaku. The Nō theatre like the Kamakura portrait was one of the culminations of world medieval art. Like any other medieval mystery theatre (and the Nō theatre was rooted in the early Buddhist *gigaku* mysteries as well as in the Shintoist rituals of *matsuri* and *kagura*) the Nō theatre occupies a most important place in medieval art. But its role in the history of Japanese culture goes far beyond the bounds of its role as a medieval mystery theatre. In the late 14th century the Nō was already a completely formed type of synthetic theatre in the fullest meaning of the word. It had its own building, its stage, its orchestra and choir, its own props and cast, its own repertoire and, finally, its own theory of theatrical art which was developed by its two founders—Kan'ami and Zeami, who worked as playwrights, directors, actors and musicians. The Nō theatre embodied a genuine synthesis of theatrical genres (drama, opera and ballet), literature (the poetic text of the *yokyoku*, a musical play whose subject derived from the feudal epics, the lives of the saints, etc.) and pictorial art (theatrical backdrops, masks and costumes). Preserved to the present day in the form in which it became crystallized during the zenith of early Tokugawa culture (late 17th century), the Nō theatre has lost nothing of its popularity and continues to serve as a living

link between the Middle Ages and modern times. The traditions of the Nō theatre and its theory have exercised great influence on the formation of the Kabuki and continue to influence modern theatrical art throughout the world.

At the basis of the theory of the Nō theatre is the Zen idea of *yugen* (the deepest essence of things and phenomena). This has been perceived in various aspects of Japanese culture in modern times, particularly in Japanese aesthetics whose influence has spread so widely today.

During the period of transition from the Middle Ages to modern times the Nō theatre demonstrated the intactness of the basic functions of the medieval canon which continued to play an important role in culture of modern times. The Nō theatre is an art phenomenon of both the Middle Ages, modern times and the present period.

The Momoyama period. The Momoyama period (1573-1614) relates equally to the medieval period and modern times. The period marked the end of an internecine war that had devastated Japan for more

than one hundred years. In traditional Japanese historiography it is called the era of the contending principalities. By the end of the period the bitter struggle for power between the big feudal lords had developed into a struggle to unite Japan. The three most popular military commanders who had come to the fore during the feudal wars were Oda Nobun, Toyotomi Hideyoshi and Tokugawa Ieyasu had first fought in an alliance together, but they soon began to fight amongst themselves. The result was that after the overthrow of the Ashikaga Shogunate in 1573 the claims of such powerful feudal lords as Takeda, Mori, Imagawa and Uesugi were finished, the position of the Buddhist Church was considerably weakened, the resistance of the peasants and the free cities was crushed and the unification of Japan was completed. In 1614 the last shogunate of Tokugawa was proclaimed. Thus in the way of so many countries a medieval feudal internecine war resulted in the fall of the feudal system, the cultural traditions of which continue in the new conditions.

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